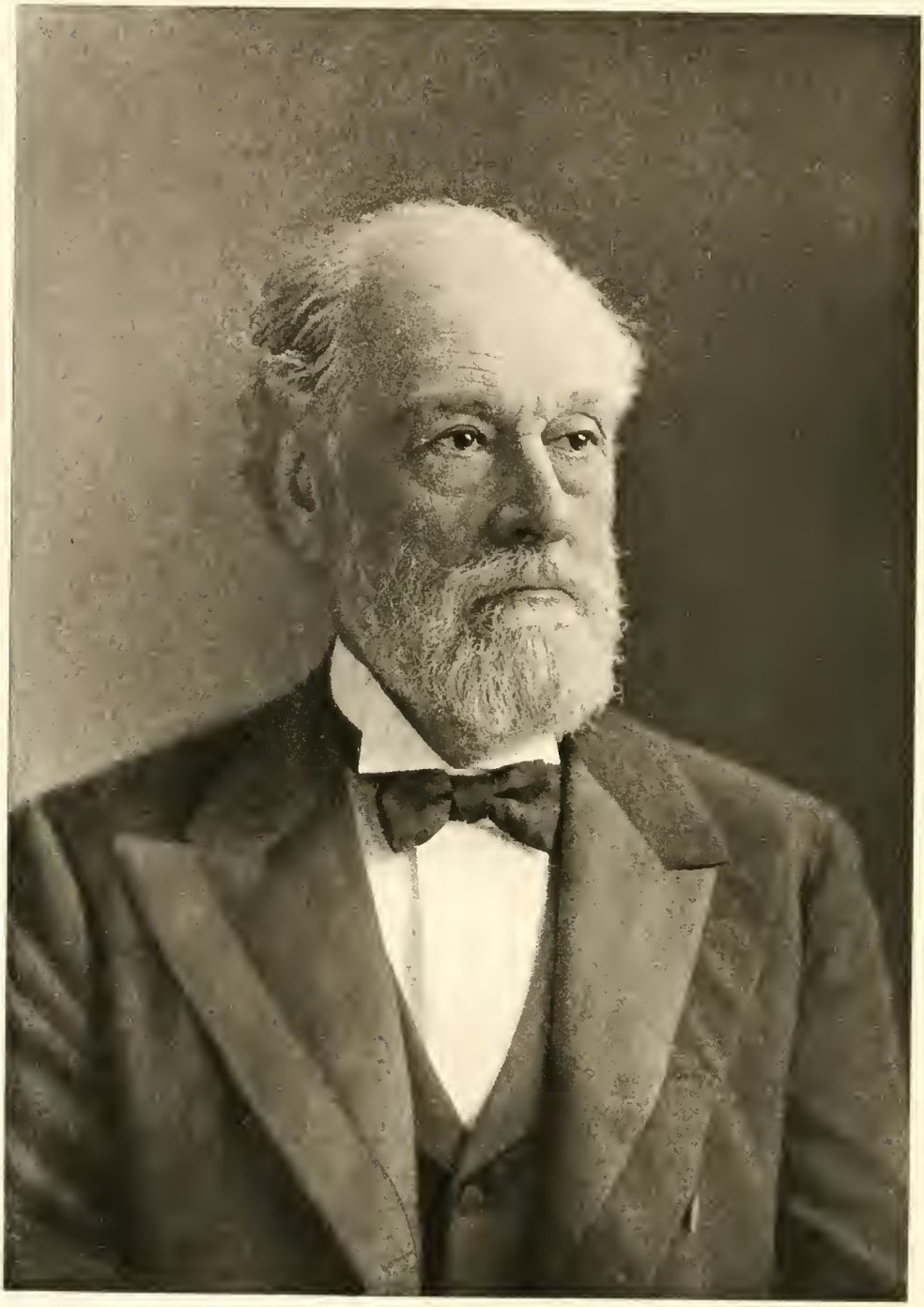

An Old-Fashioned Senator

Orville H. Platt

Of Connecticut

The Story of a Life Unselfishly Devoted to the Public Service

By

Louis A. Coolidge

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Swiftly the politic goes: is it dark?—he
borrows a lantern;
Slowly the statesman and sure, guiding
his steps by the stars.

LOWELL

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

AMONG all the public men whom the writer of this sketch has known in the course of an experience in Washington embracing twenty years, Senator Platt seems to have approached most nearly the perfect measure of disinterested service. That he should have been above any temptation to profit materially from his official place implies no special virtue, for that is fortunately a common attribute of Senators of the United States; but he possessed the rarer quality of disregard for contemporary applause or posthumous fame. He was ready to do each day's pressing duty conscientiously and unselfishly without regard to its effect upon his political fortune or personal prestige, and having the faculty of effective co-operation in an exceptional degree, he held the unbounded confidence of his associates. The impression created by watching his public conduct from year to year has been strengthened since this book was undertaken by a study of his private life from boyhood and by a perusal of the fragmentary correspondence which, through no design of his, survives him. His record from youth to age was one of uncalculating consistency—of harmonious intellectual and spiritual development.

In the decision of vital questions of legislation he was for years an important and frequently a controlling factor. During an eventful time he exercised a more pervasive influence than any other Senator, yet

so unobtrusively that it was almost the close of his career before his work received adequate recognition except from those who could appraise it near at hand. The Platt Amendment first brought him the distinction he deserved, but that document was only the triumphant application of principles which he had long maintained. His place in American history will be larger as the years go by.

In trying to delineate a character unusual in public life, it has been found expedient to review briefly the significant legislation of a quarter of a century to the shaping of which Senator Platt's practical wisdom, unfailing courage, and acknowledged loftiness of purpose were indispensable.

L. A. C.

Boston, February 22, 1910.

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Orville H. Platt

Orville H. Platt

CHAPTER I

JUDEA

Birth and Ancestry—The Litchfield Hills—Early Days in Judea—Abolition and Religious Dissent—The Underground Railroad—Boyhood on the Farm.

ORVILLE HITCHCOCK PLATT was born in the little town of Washington, Litchfield County, Connecticut, July 19, 1827. His father was Daniel Gould Platt; his mother, Almyra Hitchcock Platt. He was fortunate in his inheritance, in the time and place of his birth, and in the surroundings of his early years. Through both father and mother he was descended from long lines of New England farmers, who, generation after generation, had stood for something in the communities in which they lived. From father to son they held office in the church and in the town. They were landowners, deacons, tithing-men, and captains of militia. One ancestor was imprisoned by Governor Andros in 1681 for daring to attend a meeting of delegates "to devise means to obtain a redress of grievances under his arbitrary rule." Another was among those who marched to Fishkill in the Burgoyne

campaign of October, 1777, to reinforce General Putnam. Orville Platt's grandfather, John, was also a soldier in the Revolution and belonged to the band of "Prison Ship Martyrs." His own father was deputy sheriff and judge of probate, a school-teacher at times, as well as a tiller of the soil. It was a sturdy, loyal, patriotic, efficient New England stock.[1]

For a boy to have been born in Litchfield County in

[1] THE PLATT *Genealogy:* The Platt family was established in New Haven County, in 1638, when (I) RICHARD PLATT, an Englishman, and his wife Mary, with their four children, landed at New Haven. He was one of the sixty-one who formed a church society, August 22, 1639, and proceeded at once to settle at Milford. Of his eight children, the third, (and second son,) (II) ISAAC, was enrolled in 1666 among the fifty-seven landowners of Huntington, Long Island, where he had probably lived some years. He was recorded there in 1687. In Milford, he married Phoebe Smith, March 12, 1640, and, more than twenty years later, he married at Huntington, Elizabeth, daughter of Jonas Wood. He was captain of militia, and held every office of consequence in the town, where he died July 31, 1691.

He had six children; the eldest son and second child, (III) JONAS, born August 16, 1667, married Sarah Scudder, and had four sons: (IV) OBADIAH, the eldest of these, purchased lands in Fairfield in 1724. He married Mary Smith, August 10, 1722, and had eight children. The wife and mother died November 16, 1771, at Ridgefield. (V) JONAS, their second son and third child, born October 9, 1727, settled at Redding, where he was married, October 17, 1747, to Elizabeth, daughter of Ephraim Sanford of that place. Both were admitted church members at Redding, July 5, 1749. They had ten children, of whom the eldest, (VI) JOHN, was baptized February 5, 1752, at Redding. Both father and son served as soldiers in the Revolutionary Army, and the former was made prisoner in the Danbury raid in April, 1777, but appeared among those who marched to Fishkill in the following October, to reinforce General Putnam. The son was taken prisoner at Fort Lee, November 16, 1776. He married Elizabeth Parmelee July 7, 1775, and settled after the war in the town of Washington, Connecticut. Their children were: John, born February 21, 1776; David, born August 31, 1778; Ruth Ann, March 31, 1782; Betsy, May 8, 1790; Daniel Gould, July 25, 1797.

the early days of the last century was to have been placed in the pathway of opportunity. Nature has been gracious to the region round about. Lying at the southernmost spur of the Berkshires, villages perched on the brows of many hills look out over the winding valleys of the Housatonic and Shepaug. The town of Litchfield is one of the historic places of America, rich in memories of famous men and happenings. It was the seat of the earliest law school in America, and the home either temporary or permanent of many who were eminent at the bar or in the pulpit. Lyman Beecher preached there for years; Henry Ward Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe were born there. It was the home of Oliver Wolcott and the birthplace of Ethan Allen. It had been the home of Colonel Talmadge, an aide on General Washington's staff. Aaron Burr lived there for a year as a young man. Horace Bushnell, whose name is honored throughout the world, was born in Litchfield and spent his youth at New Preston, near-by. Many others might be named whose fame lends interest and character to the charming town. In the early years of the last century, the

---

(VII) Daniel Gould Platt, married Almyra Hitchcock, January 3, 1817, and they had children: Orville, born March 11, 1822, who died in 1826; Orville Hitchcock, born July 19, 1827, in Washington; and Simeon D., born February 12, 1832. The father died October 26, 1871.

1638.

Richard Platt, New Haven, Connecticut.
Isaac, Huntington, Long Island.
Jonas,
Obadiah, Fairfield and Redding.
Jonas, Redding.
John, Redding and Washington.
Daniel Gould, Washington, Connecticut.
Orville Hitchcock, Washington.

place was at its best, and Orville Platt, born and bred twelve miles to the south in the equally beautiful village of Washington, could hardly have avoided absorbing some of the inspiration of the environment. Within a radius of fifteen miles of his birthplace, were two other towns of Litchfield County rich in associations. At New Milford to the south, Roger Sherman lived for twenty years. At Torrington, an equal distance to the north, John Brown was born.

The town of Washington in its own right could claim distinction. It was organized during the throes of the struggle for independence by uniting two ancient Ecclesiastical Societies, and it is said to have been the first community in America to adopt the name of the Father of his Country. The older of these societies, comprising the village of Judea, lay on a level plateau overlooking the valley through which the Shepaug goes tumbling down to meet the Housatonic. Four miles away, on the other side of a high hill, were the villages of Marbledale and New Preston, which comprised the other Ecclesiastical Society. It was in the village of Judea that Orville H. Platt was born,—a community puritan and conservative to the roots. New Preston, on the other hand, had always been known as the home of religious and political dissent. It was the youthful Platt's good fortune to develop into manhood at a time when that part of New England, like many others, was in the midst of a moral revolution. The year in which he was born, 1827, was the year in which William Lloyd Garrison became the editor of the *National Philanthropist.* Four years later, Garrison established *The Liberator.* The ancient community of Washington offered fertile soil in which to sow the Abolition seed, and Daniel Gould Platt was one of

THE BOYHOOD HOME OF ORVILLE H. PLATT AT WASHINGTON, CONN.

those who received the seed gladly. In 1837, shortly after the martyrdom of Lovejoy, an Abolition convention met at Hartford, and Daniel Platt attended it with his wife. There were four others in attendance from Judea—Mr. and Mrs. John Gunn, and Mr. and Mrs. Lewis A. Canfield—representatives of a family which was to count for much in Orville Platt's life. From that time, for many years, this faithful group were the centre of a storm of persecution by which less heroic souls would have been overwhelmed. The pastor of the Judea church was Reverend Gordon Hayes, an able and bigoted theologian. Abolitionism he regarded as a heresy and he set about to stamp it out. He devoted sermon after sermon to attacks upon the strange doctrine, denouncing it in the name of patriotism and religion. He found sanction for slavery in the Bible, and he was as honest as he was earnest in his attacks upon those who sought to bring it to an end. The Abolitionists were equally intense. They held meetings in which their speakers cried out against slavery as a sin and forswore communion with slaveholders as collusion with sin. Finally an extraordinary episode brought on the crisis with a rush. Miss Abby Kelly in 1839 was known far and wide as an Abolition speaker. In August of that year she was preaching the New Evangel throughout western Connecticut, and Daniel Platt and Lewis Canfield with their wives drove to a neighboring town and brought her to Washington, where she remained for a fortnight, appearing at numerous Abolition meetings. For women to speak in public was in those days an almost unheard of thing, and for one to enter actively into the discussion of political affairs was revolutionary and abhorrent. Parson Hayes and his conservative congregation were

shaken with wrath. The impudent challenge of the Abolitionists was met with promptness and decision. Under the date of August 8, 1839, there appears in the records of the Judea church the following entry:

> At a meeting of the church convened in consequence of a notice of a meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society at which it was said a female would lecture:
>
> *Resolved*, That we are opposed to the introduction of female public lecturers into this society by members of this church, and to females giving such lectures in it.

This action was followed promptly by Mr. Hayes in a sermon from the following plain-spoken text:

> Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.
>
> And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.
>
> Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.—Rev. ii., 20–22.

The sermon fitted the text. The reverend preacher, looking over to where Miss Abby Kelly sat in the congregation, referred to female lecturers travelling alone by night and by day, and plainly intimated that the lady's character was no better than it ought to be. As the benediction was pronounced, John Gunn called down from the gallery that the minister's insinuations were false. As the preacher was leaving the church, Miss Abby Kelly walked directly up to him and said:

"Gordon Hayes, you have said things most injurious to my character. I hope God will forgive you."

After such an episode, the warring factions could not

listen to the word of God from the same pulpit. The Abolitionists withdrew and organized a church of their own. Their secession was followed promptly by excommunication. They had no recognized place of meeting, but gathered in different villages all over the county, often compelled to resort to barns and groves. Among these covenanters were Daniel Gould Platt and Almyra Hitchcock Platt. Their oldest boy, Orville, was then at the impressionable age of twelve years.

A little later, the Reverend Gordon Hayes himself became discredited by the vigor of a sermon denouncing calisthenics, promiscuous dancing, and tableaux as the service of Satan and the sure concomitants of vice. He was dismissed from the church, and with his departure the differences gradually were healed. The Abolitionists who had been excommunicated were privately invited to re-unite with the church. They declined, but the bitterness of the conflict was at an end.[1]

[1] Of this time, nearly fifty years later, Mr. Platt wrote:

"It was the time of the fierce Anti-Slavery excitement—one of those periods in the history of communities when the hearts of men are stirred to attack great and hideous wrongs, and to do battle for the right with a zeal and courage which cannot be hindered or abated until the right triumphs—a time when not only fetters on human limbs but fetters on human thought were to be broken.

"A great reform had begun. A few men had seen the wickedness of slavery and had fathered the movement for its Abolition. Human rights in the eyes of these men had become sacred, and they had determined that they should be recognized and respected. Slavery was strongly intrenched and defended. Its power was everywhere felt; its influence penetrated the state, the church, society. It was a fearful sin and crime against God and against man, and eyes to see its wickedness and courage to attack it were given to only a few rare souls. They made the fight manfully and nobly, but they were met and opposed by almost the entire

From father and mother of deep religious convictions, militant Abolitionists who were ready to suffer excommunication from the church for an ideal, Orville Platt inherited a conscience, righteous courage, and lofty principles. Every particle of information that comes

---

people. An Abolitionist was but one against a hundred or a thousand. The assailants of slavery were proscribed, shunned, mobbed, and treated as social outcasts. Neither they nor their children were welcomed in the house of one who was not an Abolitionist. The social proscription of those days can scarcely be understood or imagined. Probably the world has never seen a loftier courage or more heroic living than was manifested by the men who saw their duty to the slave, and through the slave to humanity. The slave was a *man*, and as such, men were ready to suffer all things in his behalf, to die if necessary.

"Like all reformers, the Abolitionist was aggressive. Slavery was the crime of crimes, and it was, in his conviction, the solemn duty of all men to attack it. Whoever defended or apologized for it was as wicked as the slaveholders. The Whig party was deemed to be governed by the slaveholders, so the Abolitionists withdrew from it and made war upon it. The Constitution was claimed to guarantee the right of property in slaves, and the Abolitionists repudiated and denounced the Constitution. But the battle raged fiercest in the church. Slavery was defended from the Bible; church organizations refused, upon the demand of the Abolitionists, to pass resolutions against the institution, or to say that slaveholding was incompatible with church membership or Christian character; while ministers preached in favor of slavery and against the Abolitionists.

"The little town of Washington was in a fever of excitement. The minister from the pulpit thundered anathemas against the Abolitionists, while they, in their turn, denounced the church, and those of its members who apologized for slavery and the slaveholder, as equal in guilt with him. The minister proclaimed the authority of the church to bind its members; the Abolitionists, in turn, defied the church. The doctrines of the church came to stand for religion, and the Abolitionists attacked not only the church but its creed. The church retorted with the cry of infidelity, excommunicated the unruly and insubordinate members, and was, for the time being, victorious. It will be readily seen that such a conflict went to the roots of religious faith and doctrine. Men became freethinkers, in the sense that they thought freely

WASHINGTON GREEN AND THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

down to us concerning this remarkable couple tends to increase our respect for them. For years they carried on their fight against slavery, buoyed up by the inspiration of the little band of Abolition co-workers. Many years after their death, an old friend in a reminiscent letter dated July 6, 1901, wrote to Senator Platt of a visit to Judea in 1847:

I was at home in your father's house. He is one amongst the early Abolitionists who is silhouetted on my memory most vividly, and of all the Anti-Slavery women, your mother is so distinctly in the foreground, the others of our State seem accessories. I cannot define the elements of her personality and character, but they stand out in my memory with such clearness that half a century has not dimmed the features.

Your father was a full-grown man in stature, as well as in conscience and intellect; your mother, a heroic soul, one among ten thousand. I see her now as she was in 1842–8 to the hunted Abolitionist, "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."[1]

---

and fearlessly. Sometimes, doubtless, they were wrong, but always in earnest and outspoken. Creeds could not bind the consciences of such men. They found a law higher than creeds; they inquired only what was duty to God and man, and did their duty as they saw it."

[1] A school-fellow has said of Orville Platt's father and mother: "Daniel Platt was a man of fine face and figure, intelligent, kindly, and courteous. He took a prominent part in town politics and religious meetings, and was a forcible, modest, and convincing speaker. Orville's mother was a stately, handsome woman, quiet in manner, prudent in speech, but positive in her convictions. She seldom mingled in social gatherings, but found her greatest pleasure in the simple home life, attending to her domestic duties, reading the Scriptures and standard works, and teaching her boys by precept and example the virtues of goodness, charity, sobriety, and whatever else contributed to the development of sturdy self-reliance and manly manhood. In all the essentials of wise character building she was never lacking. The impress she left on

Daniel Platt's home was a station on the underground railway. Many a trembling black refugee came there by night to be forwarded by him on the road to Canada. The usual route was by way of New Milford, to Washington, whence they were taken by night to General Uriel Tuttle's in Torrington or Dr. Vaill's on the Wolcottville road. Orville, a boy in his teens, used to accompany his father frequently on these trips. The slaves stayed, as a rule, but a short time at the Platt farm, though some remained for several weeks until it was learned, through the channels of communication among Abolitionists, that their whereabouts was suspected; then they were sent on.

Aside from such incidents typical of an heroic time, the lad's life was that of the ordinary farmer's boy of the day. His parents had neither poverty nor riches. The farm his father tilled was rented on shares. The home, a typical farmhouse of the time, still stands. One who remembers the early days says:

Orville's mind was wholesome and lasting. She was ever a living memory in his heart, and he never spoke of her except in terms of reverent affection. She was an excellent housewife, baked her own bread, made her own butter, and kept the wearing apparel of father and sons, as well as her own, in excellent condition. Farmers' wives had to work in those days, and Mrs. Platt never shirked her share. Her kitchen, dining- and sitting-rooms (the parlor was a later innovation), were always cleanly and inviting."

Almyra Hitchcock was one of a numerous family, several of whom emigrated to the Western Reserve in Ohio, where their descendants still live. A brother was Samuel J. Hitchcock, born at Bethlehem, Connecticut, and graduated at Yale in 1809. He was a tutor at Yale from 1811 to 1815, and was subsequently, until his death, instructor of law. He received the degree of LL.D. in 1842. Died in 1845. He was mayor of the city of New Haven, judge of the Court of Common Pleas, and commissioner of bankruptcy during the continuance of the national bankruptcy law. Another brother, Benjamin, was an editor of the New Haven *Journal and Courier.*

The home was a two-storied white structure about a mile from town, facing southerly, a pleasant yard in front enclosing shrubbery and the inevitable lilac bushes, the earliest harbingers of a New England spring. It was situated on a high plateau sloping to the roadway and thence to a ravine, through which ran a brook that crossed the road farther down, affording a favorite drinking place for horses. On the east was the garden patch, and north, the farm, small-sized and stony. The roadway passing by the house made a circuit towards the north through chestnut woods, then turning to the right came to the house of Elnathan Mitchell, a brother of the famous scientist, Professor Mitchell of North Carolina.

During the busy haying season, as a rule, twelve or thirteen men would be employed, and the mother always took care of them unaided by any maid. In the morning, when all were gathered for family worship, the father would read the Scripture and the mother would explain it. Young Platt worked with his father until he was eighteen years of age. Sometimes he worked for other farmers for wages. Daniel Nettleton, who used to be employed on the Platt farm during haying, says of him:

Orville was a fine mower, cutting faster and closer, and carrying a much wider swath than any of the men. It was the custom in those days to start a large number of men mowing, one just behind another, and Orville was always put ahead, leading the field from the start and right through.

As a boy [Mr. Platt wrote once to a friend], I used to make maple syrup on my father's farm, after the rude methods of those days, carrying sap buckets on a neck yoke sometimes a quarter to a third of a mile, boiling it away to

syrup or sugaring-off point in an old potash kettle in an outhouse at home—so I think I know when it is good.[1]

As a boy just bursting into young manhood Orville Platt is remembered as "fine-looking, tall, and handsome, with beautiful dark brown hair and eyes." One who afterwards came to know him intimately says:

All my life I have carried in my mind the picture of Orville Platt and his younger brother, Simeon, as they used to come into the gallery of the old Judea church. Orville was the tallest and handsomest young man I have ever seen.

[1] Many years later in the United States Senate, Mr. Platt referred to conditions in his native State during his boyhood as follows: "I am not a very old man, but recollection carries me back fifty years, when there was no railroad, no coal used, no steam power used; no woollen factories except of the rudest sort; no telegraph in Connecticut. Possibly there were one hundred tons of coal consumed in the State annually. It is possible that there was the rude beginning of manufacturing establishments in which steam was the motive power; but practically there were none of these improvements in Connecticut. The people were rural and agricultural; a few shops, water furnishing the motive power, were scattered up and down the streams of the State, but almost the entire population were engaged in agriculture. It was a time when the handbrake and the hetchel prepared the flax which was raised within her borders, when hand-spinning and the hand-loom prepared it for use. My mind goes back and takes in the days of my early boyhood, when wool was carded by hand, when it was spun and woven by the mothers and the daughters, when it was then taken to the fulling-mill and when the tailoress came and in the household cut and made the cloth into garments for the use of the family. It was the day of the village shoemaker, the day of the grist-mill, the day of the stage-coach, the day of the pillion. There were no carpets; no piano; few books; hand-sewing only; hand-knitting; the tallow candle; the unwarmed, unlighted church; the schoolhouse with its hard, rough benches; and the slow post-route, the mail once a week; a weekly paper only. It was a week's journey from Connecticut to Washington; six weeks' journey from Connecticut to Ohio. Five thousand dollars in those days was a competence and $10,000 was a fortune."

ORVILLE H. PLATT, AGED 18

FROM A DAGUERREOTYPE TAKEN IN 1845

CHAPTER II

TEACHER AND PUPIL

The "Master of the Gunnery"—A Pupil's Tribute—School Days—Ostracism for Anti-Slavery Views—Teaching School in Judea—A Year at Towanda—Admission to the Bar—Marriage—Removal to Meriden—A Lover of the Woods—Judea Revisited—The Adirondacks.

FREDERICK W. GUNN, the "Master of the Gunnery," well beloved by generations of schoolboys and revered by the elders, merits a place in this book for the noble influence he exerted on Orville Platt's life. Although ten years the senior of the younger man, he was friend and comrade as well as teacher. No story of Washington and Litchfield County would approach completeness which failed to say something of this extraordinary man. He was a younger brother of that John Gunn who was associated with Daniel Platt in Abolition activities and he was destined to be as stout an adversary of slavery as any of his elders. No more tender tribute to a friend was ever penned than the sketch which Senator Platt contributed to a memorial of Mr. Gunn printed in 1887. It reveals much of the inner life of both men and is significant of the influences that went to shape the character and career of the younger.

"He was more to me than a teacher," writes the pupil grown old; "my love for him was the love one has for father, brother, and friend."

Frederick W. Gunn was born in 1816 about a mile from Washington Green. He was the youngest of eight children, all of whom became identified with the Anti-Slavery cause. The eldest, John, "a man singularly gentle, open-hearted, simple, and honest, but made of the stuff we worship in heroes and martyrs," was conspicuous in the leadership of the little Abolition band and was identified closely with Daniel and Almyra Platt. It has been said of him that "although by nature one of the most modest and quiet of men, and shrinking from public gaze, he surprised both friends and foes by becoming one of the boldest, sternest, and most aggressive champions of the slave."

Frederick, the "Master of the Gunnery," entered Yale College in the Class of 1837. Among his classmates were Chief-Justice M. R. Waite, William M. Evarts, Edwards Pierrepont, and Benjamin Silliman.

His scholarship was good but not conspicuous [says his pupil biographer in words that might well have been self-descriptive]. He was not a bookworm; not a plodder. The time and energy which, perhaps, otherwise applied, might have won him the first honors, were largely used in the study of literature and poetry. . . . Transferred to the city he lost none of his love for country surroundings. He excelled in the study of botany. He loved the freedom of the open fields—the solitude of the seashore. In those days as all through his later years, he was fond of hunting and fishing. He enjoyed such pastimes with the relish of the true hunter and angler, whose real pleasure is found, not in killing game and catching fish, but in the exhilaration which comes to one who roams alone the woods and fields, in the quiet peace of mind experienced when he wanders by the brookside, and watches the flow of the rippling water. . . . His ideal was manliness. His development of that ideal was along the line of physical, intellectual,

and sentimental growth. He cultivated muscle, health, imagination, taste, intellect! . . . His idea of education, acted upon in his own college experience as well as when he came to be a teacher, was the perfecting of a noble manhood—the creating of a noble life.

After leaving college, he began teaching at the Academy in New Preston, and, in 1839, he opened his school in the Academy at Judea. It was here that Orville H. Platt, who had begun his education in the Old Red Schoolhouse on the Green, first fell under his inspiring influence. Mr. Gunn's success at New Preston had given him prestige, and at the beginning his school was filled beyond its capacity. But a great change was at hand:

His development had thus far been in the direction of mental and sentimental growth [says his biographer]. His brain had become keen and analytical; he was logical, and a dangerous antagonist in debate. He had cultivated a pure and elevated taste, and an admiration for the noble and heroic, but his moral nature as yet had had little to test it. Naturally of upright life, he had had little occasion to think of abstract principles or to study abstract questions of duty. But a crisis was coming. Manliness, truth, principle, were words which were to have new meanings for him. Right was to become to him the touchstone of life. To follow duty wherever and however it seemed to lead was to be for him a new experience, and duty and right were to lead him into the face of trials, of difficulties, of opposition, of persecution, through detraction and abuse, such as we, with the lapse of these intervening years, can scarcely realize.[1]

[1] "It is not easy to sketch the life of a friend whose memory we cherish as a rich legacy. For as we knew him through the medium of our love, as we perceived his admirable qualities through the lens of a silent sympathy, it is very natural that we should shrink

It was near the beginning of the fierce Anti-Slavery agitation. Frederick Gunn, convinced by the arguments of his brother John that slavery was wrong, became a leader on the Anti-Slavery side. His fearlessness, his severity of attack, his ability of statement, and his force of argument marked him out for special

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from disclosing to others the estimate of his character we have thus acquired. We do not like to analyze his character; we prefer rather to regard it as a unit. It seems unnatural to weigh and compare its differing constituents, to question and decide which particular trait most endeared our friend to us, or made him most helpful to others; above all, the consciousness that we can never so describe him that he will appear to others as he did to us, and the certainty that our portrait will be sadly imperfect, make us feel at the outset that we may regret having attempted the work. And so I hesitate, almost fear, to attempt the story of Mr. Gunn's early life and struggles. He was more to me than a teacher; my love for him was the love one has for father, brother, and friend. To those who knew him as I knew him, all I can write will seem unappreciative. To those who knew him but casually, it may, in some measure, set forth and account for his rare development of manhood and manly goodness. . . .

"Mr. Gunn was a rarely developed man, possessing largely all those generous qualities and characteristics which inspire confidence and love in others. Keen and vigorous of intellect, he was tender and true of heart. He was proud, not haughty. His pride was that of conscious nobility, and rectitude. He loved God, loved man, loved truth; and he served God, served man, served truth. He hated evil, wrong, falseness, meanness, and he made war on them always. He was unflinching in his devotion to principle—uncompromising in his conflict with the wrong. He was pure and virtuous in life, reverent toward goodness and purity, but contemptuous toward bigotry and shams. He had the courage of his convictions, and practised rigidly what he believed. He was generous in his sympathies, warm in his friendships, ardent in his love. There was no malice in his nature. Open and frank in his intercourse, helpful in conduct, his example and teaching were an inspiration. His great aim was to live a noble life himself, and aid others to live such a life. His ideal standard of living was more divine than human, and his struggle was to attain his ideal. He may have been faulty; who is perfect? He may have been harsh in his judgments at times; but it was not because his nature was harsh. He was

condemnation. He was not a church member, his manner was not reverential, he had little regard for the outward formalities of the church, and therefore was the more easily branded an "infidel." The issue between him and the minister was well defined and undisguised. The minister proclaimed him a heretic. He proclaimed the minister a bigot and attacked what the minister preached as religion with all the weapons at his command. Argument, invective, ridicule, satire he used unsparingly. The church members and the whole community other than the Abolitionists sided with the minister. Mr. Gunn was stigmatized as an Abolitionist and an infidel—words of intense reproach, the import of which we now but feebly realize.

The story of how the "Master of the Gunnery," after persecution and exile, established and maintained in Washington a school for boys which shed a beneficent influence of incalculable extent and power so that when he died in 1881 he was followed to the grave by such grief and blessings as followed Dr. Arnold of Rugby, belongs to other pages than these. Only that is written of him here which helps to interpret the wholesome and inspiring surroundings of Orville H. Platt's early life; and who can estimate the noble influence upon the mind of a clean and whole-hearted boy, with a natural love for woods, streams, and fields, exerted by close

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gentle and tender as a woman; but in the championship of the weak he struck harder than he thought. He was unambitious, careless of worldly honors, indifferent to wealth or fame. Had he chosen he could have easily filled a larger place in the world's notice. He neither achieved nor sought success as the world measures success; but he realized the great aim of his life in that he lived and died a true man, and impressed on many lives the seal of a sterling manhood."—From Mr. Platt's "Memorial" in *The Master of the Gunnery.*

association with this open-minded, nature-loving, man-loving instructor of youth.

Orville Platt first became a pupil of Mr. Gunn's in 1840 when he was thirteen years old; and during the next eight years he enjoyed the closest relations with his teacher. First he attended the Academy, near the Meeting-House, on the Green, and when one by one the church members and followers of Parson Hayes withdrew their children from the school, the son of Daniel Platt, the Abolitionist, remained.

At school, his favorite study was mathematics; but he was fond of ancient and modern history and of geography, and studied Latin, but not Greek. He is said by a school-fellow to have been "correct in his phrasing, accurate in pronunciation, and choice in his English." He never violated the school rules, and he was of a serious nature, bent on making the most of his opportunities. He joined in outdoor sports. At baseball he was a good runner and catcher, but "when it came to hitting the ball, he lunged at it with terrific force." In football he is described as a "towering, dominating figure. Sometimes he could be tripped or outgeneralled; but once under way, the ball in advance, he followed it up with tempestuous force." He could beat all the other boys at a standing jump and had a record of twelve feet to his credit. He is remembered as having always been fair and square in the school-boy games. "If he accidentally stepped on or rolled over anybody he was as sorry as his limping or disabled competitor could be."

Through allegiance to an ideal, Mr. Gunn's first school in Judea was ruined. At the end of four years the number of his pupils was reduced to nine—all children of Abolitionists. Mr. Gunn was forbidden

the use of the Academy building, and moved his little school to the house of his sister, Mrs. Canfield, on the site of which the Gunnery now stands. In 1845, some friends in New Preston, who remembered his success there as a teacher and who sympathized with him in his persecution, determined to "show Judea that Mr. Gunn could teach school in New Preston even if he *was* an Abolitionist." They invited him to return and he did so. His enemies in Judea tried every device to prevent parents from sending their children to a school taught by a "heretic and an infidel," and some were dissuaded; but many Abolitionists from surrounding towns sent their sons and daughters to New Preston and this made the school a success.

Orville Platt attended the school for three winters, living for two winters with Mr. Gunn. The third winter he himself taught at the schoolhouse on Christian Street, aptly named, according to tradition, because at one time every house on the street was owned by a professed Christian. For this he received eleven dollars a month and "boarded around" after the manner of the district school teacher of the day—making his headquarters at the house of the chairman of the district committee who employed him, and who took him in when the family to which he happened to be assigned for a week were so poor he did not care to board with them.

In 1847, Mr. Gunn abandoned New Preston, at the urgency of friends who had settled in Towanda, Pennsylvania. Towanda was the home of David Wilmot, the author of the Wilmot Proviso. The Abolition sentiment was strong and to be an Abolitionist did not subject one to reproach. He became principal of a large school there; but before leaving New Preston he persuaded

young Platt to accompany him as assistant. Mr. Platt, then twenty years old, spent one winter at Towanda. It was an eventful winter for him, for it brought him in contact with the young woman who was to become his wife, and with whom he was destined to spend forty-three years of his life—Miss Annie Bull, the only daughter of one of the leading families of Towanda with whom Mr. Platt made his home. They were married May 15, 1850. They had two sons, one of whom died in infancy. The other, James P. Platt, is now a judge on the Federal bench.

In the spring of 1848, Mr. Platt returned to Judea, and began the study of the law. He had the privilege of reading under Gideon H. Hollister of Litchfield, one of the recognized legal authorities of the day. It was no child's play; for he was obliged to read Blackstone and the other standard works at home and then drive or walk over to Litchfield, twelve miles away, to recite to Mr. Hollister, whom he surprised one day by repeating from memory the long opening chapter of Blackstone without a break.

During the winter of 1848, he taught in the Academy on the Green and he seems to have eked out his salary as teacher by private instruction. The returns were not dazzling, if we may judge from the following receipted bill which has come down to us:

Truman Woodruff, to O. H. Platt, Dr.,

To tuition of John, 11 weeks	$2.96
Incidental expenses	.37½
	$3.33½

Rec'd payment, March 2d, 1849.

O. H. Platt.

However, he was able to lay by a little money, and we find him in the spring abandoning this means of livelihood and taking up his residence in Litchfield where he entered Mr. Hollister's office. In the spring of 1850 he was admitted to the Litchfield County Bar and immediately went back to Towanda to be married. For a time after his marriage it was a question whether he would make his permanent home in Towanda or not. For six months he was in the office of Ulysses S. Mercur, afterwards Chief-Justice of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, and, at the end of that period, he was admitted to practice in the Pennsylvania courts. The home call was too strong, however, and shortly after his admission to the Pennsylvania Bar he concluded to return to Connecticut. He lived with his father, while looking about the State to determine where he should settle as a lawyer.

Bearing letters of recommendation from Senator Truman Smith and others, to Judge Eleazar K. Foster and James Donaghe, then Collector of Customs at New Haven, he sought their advice, and followed it by locating at Meriden, a rising industrial town, twenty miles north of New Haven. On December 1, 1850, he went to Meriden and engaged an office which had to be fitted up for him. While waiting for the office to be completed he returned to Judea, spending the winter with his father. He went to Meriden finally in the spring of 1851, to begin the active practice of the law.[1]

[1] In the summer of 1902, in order that his granddaughter might know something of his early life, Mr. Platt dictated the following, at Mrs. Platt's request: "I was born July 19, 1827, in the house which stood on the left-hand side of the road leading from Blackville to Davies Hollow, some fifty rods beyond the old Samuel Baldwin place. Only the cellar remains, and that is filled with small trees which have grown since the house was torn down. The

So he left the haunts of his boyhood to enter the activities of the world; but the time never came that his heart did not turn toward the familiar places in Judea. After all, that was his home; he loved to dwell upon its beauties and charm, and many a time his wandering

property is now owned by Charles C. Ford, and with his permission I have transplanted a young ash, which is growing finely on my lawn at Kirby Corner. The barn formerly connected with the house is still standing. The road on which the homestead stood was known as 'Sabbaday Lane,' possibly, because it led to the First Episcopal Church in Washington, which stood in Davies Hollow near the little old burying-ground.

"My father was Daniel G. Platt, and my mother was Almyra Hitchcock Platt, whose family lived in Bethlehem. When I was born my father was a farmer and taught school in winter. I remember he took me with him as a child, one day, to the schoolhouse which stood on the Canfield place nearly opposite the entrance to Arthur Woodruff's lot. This building was removed to the site now occupied by the town hall on the Green, and was fitted up and became what was known as the 'Old Red School House.'

"When I was perhaps two years old, my father moved to what is now the Aspinwall place, the property then being owned by the daughters of Matthew Mitchell, who was, I think, a brother of Elnathan Mitchell. They lived in South Britain, and my father rented the farm from them on shares. It extended on the north to the road leading to Blackville, known as 'Goose Hill,' embracing all the land south of a line drawn from there to the road running north from Powell G. Seeley's, being bounded on the north by Nelson and Charles Ford's land. It also embraced the lots south of the Aspinwall place (called in my boyhood the 'Punishment Lots'), as well as the land owned now by Charles Daignan, on which is situated the reservoir from which water is brought to the Green.

"I have sometimes wondered whether the 'hills standing round about it' made our forefathers name our part of the town Judea—it looks down on the beautiful valley of the Shepaug, and the whole country is full of running brooks. The first time I went fishing, I was about four years old—my tackle was a common string, with a bent up pin for hook, and I landed one small shiner, as Miss Julia Canfield sat beside me on the bank.

"I lived at the Aspinwall place, working on the farm (after I was old enough) until the year 1847, and first attended school in the Old Red School House on the Green, but cannot tell whether my

feet strayed back to the Litchfield hills, where every house and every field had its reminiscence. Above all things he liked to roam the woods, and he was never so happy as when tramping his favorite trails and whipping his favorite streams. He was one of the most

first teacher was Antoinette Judson, or Sophia Turner, who became Mrs. Preston Hollister. I know it was taught by a Mr. Northrup also, who came from New Milford. Later, I went to the Academy which stood on the rock north of the town hall, taught by a Mr. Jennings and subsequently by Mr. Gunn. The Academy, under Mr. Gunn's tuition, dwindled in attendance on account of the Abolition troubles, until finally he did not attempt to teach in the Academy building, but had a school in Mr. Lewis Canfield's house, where the Gunnery now stands, living there with his sister, Mrs. Canfield. The schoolroom was small, and was entered from the hall by the front door as it now exists. I think there were only eleven pupils. I do not recall all of them—they were mostly sons and daughters of pronounced Abolitionists.

"After a while Mr. Gunn abandoned the project of a school in his sister's house, and taught, for possibly three winters, the Academy in New Preston which I attended, living with him at Mrs. Cogswell's for two winters, the third, teaching at the schoolhouse on Christian Street, at eleven dollars per month, boarding around. Abiel Lemon, who employed me, was chairman of the district committee, and his house was headquarters, *i. e.*, when the people were so poor I did not wish to board with them, he took me in.

"The next fall, 1847, I went with Mr. Gunn to Towanda, Pennsylvania, as his assistant in a large school of which he had become principal. Returning in the spring I commenced the study of law with Gideon H. Hollister of Litchfield, going up there to recite to Mr. Hollister.

"In the winter of 1848, I taught in the Academy on the Green, Mr. Gunn still being in Towanda. The following spring I went to Litchfield permanently, entering Mr. Hollister's office, which was a brick building on the east side of South Street; Judge Seymour had an office in the same building.

"I was admitted to the Litchfield County Bar in the early spring of 1850, and immediately went back to Towanda, where I was married on May 15th of that year.

"I was six months in the office of Ulysses S. Mercur, who was subsequently Chief-Justice of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.

"It was a question whether I would settle there or not. At the

skilful fishermen anywhere to be found. He knew the haunts and habits of all fish; knew just how to lure them, what bait to use in varying circumstances. Yet it made little difference to him whether he was lucky in his sport or not. He went fishing for the sake of going, for the pleasure of being in the woods, of building a fire outdoors to cook his primitive meal of bacon and toasted bread and coffee; of loafing under the trees and by the brooks. He was versed in the lore of the woods. He loved to stroll through them slowly, picking the leaves and blossoms here and there, examining them and classifying them in his mind. He knew every tree, every shrub, and every flower, the note of every bird, the ways of every wild thing, animate or not. A little later in life the call of the forest carried him farther away from civilization to the Adirondacks and to fishing grounds in Canada. In the Adirondacks, near Long Lake, he built him a shanty which he called a camp, under the shadow of Mt. Seward, a seven-mile row to the post-office, and an all-day ride by buckboard to the nearest railroad. To this spot, for many years up to the last summer of his life, he hurried just as soon as he could get away from the grinding work of legislation. There he lived as close to nature as he could get. Five years of his life, he said once near the end of it, he had spent outdoors in the woods. In these surroundings he passed happy days. The guides all loved him as one of their own. No matter how ill or

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end of six months I was admitted to practice in the courts of that State, and then concluded to return to Connecticut, bringing my wife with me. My father in the meantime had moved from the Aspinwall place to the house which he had built upon a small farm on the Litchfield road, next beyond what is now known as the 'Mason place,' and I went there and began to look about that I might decide where to settle as a lawyer in Connecticut."

A WASHINGTON TROUT BROOK

useless he might feel on leaving the Capital, no sooner would he approach the familiar scenes than his spirits would begin to revive; and when he reached the camp and the familiar shanty he seemed to shed like an uncomfortable coat the melancholy with which at such seasons he was too frequently oppressed. With Charlie Long, Steve Lamos, or Charlie Sabbatis, the guides, he would fall at once unconsciously into the vernacular, asking for all the trifling history of the little community in the woods and swapping stories and experiences with as keen a zest as though that were the only existence he ever knew. He would hardly unpack his baggage before he was swinging through the forest with sweeping strides as happy and hopeful as a boy. No matter how much under the weather he might have been there was no further need for doctors or attendants. He was back with nature once more, communing on terms of equality with the denizens of the wild.

Mr. Platt was twice married. The wife of his youth was for many years an invalid, requiring his constant watchfulness and care, and to the last she was sustained and comforted by a considerate, sympathetic devotion such as is rarely seen. When she died in November, 1893, he felt as though the bottom had dropped out of his world.

Forty-three years of married life have passed into memory [he wrote nearly a year later to a boyhood friend]. It has been, still is, hard to accustom myself to the change, hard to catch on again, or to feel that anything is left for me but waiting for my time to come. I try to meet things as a courageous man should, but I cannot get above the feeling that I must plod on alone henceforth.

The next years of his life were the most gloomy that

he had ever known, and nothing but the necessity for constant attention to his duties in the Senate carried him through. Then came a change which broadened the current of the stream. When he was studying law in Litchfield, one of his friends and counsellors was Truman Smith, for many years in Congress, and United States Senator from 1849 to 1854. A daughter, Jeannie P. Smith, had known him then and looked up to him from a distance as a young man grown. They lost sight of each other, one wedded, going to Meriden, the other to Washington D. C., and afterwards to Stamford. She became the wife and then the widow of George A. Hoyt, a successful man of business and affairs. Later they were brought together again. For several years they had neighboring camps in the Adirondacks, and the two families became devoted friends. She was a woman of travel, and culture, and familiar with public affairs, and it was not strange that they should be drawn to one another. On April 29, 1897, they were married and the new alliance, coming at the dawn of a period when great and absorbing issues were to compel his attention, was of a value to the Senator which it is not easy now to calculate. To the end he rested unquestioningly and with a feeling of relief upon her cheerful counsel and assistance. One service she rendered for which those who cared for him must ever be grateful. She built him a house at Kirby Corner near one of his favorite spots in Judea. The two entered into the joy of planning and furnishing it with as much delight as though they were to have unending years of pleasure there. At Kirby Corner in the last stage he passed days of rare contentment and there he welcomed the end.

CHAPTER III

MERIDEN

Meriden and the First Church—Twenty-eight Years a Practising Lawyer—A Political Organizer—Judge of Probate—Chairman of American and Republican State Committees—Secretary of State—A Member of the General Assembly—Speaker of the House—"Picture Platt"—State's Attorney—The Bible Class—Masonry—The Metabetchouan Fishing and Game Club—Interest in Business Development—Financial Reverses.

WHEN the young lawyer arrived in Meriden in the spring of 1851, he found a thriving town of 3,000 people. He lived there twenty-eight years, before he was sent to the Senate; and up to the day of his death, it was his legal residence and voting place, although his winters were passed in Washington and his summers either in the Adirondack woods or in the quiet seclusion of Judea.

Wherever he might go, his interest in the progress of Meriden went with him. There was the home he had earned by years of practice at the law; there was the church of which he early became a member; there were the friends of his young manhood who had helped him to his first political success. He saw the village multiply in population and industry almost beyond the recognition of his early days, and the time never came when he did not look forward with pleasure to the home-coming at the close of each session of Congress.

His law office at first was on Colony Street, in a brick building owned by Almon Andrews, since destroyed by fire and rebuilt and now owned by the Grand Army of the Republic.

When I first went to Meriden [Mr. Platt said three years before his death] I boarded with Doctor Hough, whose house stood upon the ground now occupied by the First National Bank; afterwards, I boarded with Mr. Morgan, and later went to housekeeping. The first law business I did was to draw five warranty deeds for Mr. Andrews, of whom I rented my office, for which I received one dollar and twenty-five cents.

He thus began humbly like any other briefless young lawyer entering as a stranger into the life of a small though busy community. For the first year or so cases were few and unremunerative. He had so much time on his hands that he was always available for the recreations of the village, and ready to accept an invitation to a game of checkers or chess. Many a day he would shut up his office and go fishing. Some of his old associates say he would do this even though he happened to be in the midst of a case; but a better version seems to be that he did not have enough cases to interfere with his fishing.[1]

[1] In the early years of his life in Meriden, Mr. Platt with a number of other young professional and business men of the county organized a baseball club which used to play on the old hospital grounds at New Haven. It is said to have been the first attempt in the State of Connecticut to play the national game under systematic rules. The club was divided into two nines which played against each other two or three times a week, and in the list of the players appear names which later became well known. One was N. D. Sperry, Secretary of the Republican National Committee at the time of Lincoln's first election, a financial backer of Ericsson in the building of the *Monitor*, and for many years a member of Congress. Another was Alfred H. Terry, afterwards Major-General

But it did not take long to establish friendly relations with the substantial citizens of the village, and within two years of his arrival he stood so well that he was elected Judge of Probate, a position which he occupied from 1853 to 1856. Whatever may have been his early

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Terry, the hero of Fort Fisher, and a famous Indian fighter. Fifty years later on the occasion of a reception tendered Mr. Sperry at New Haven, Mr. Platt wrote from his country home:

"WASHINGTON, CONNECTICUT,
September 29, 1903.

"DEAR MR. SPERRY:

"I am invited to come down and attend the reception to be given you on the fifteenth of October and have been wondering what I can say about you. It occurs to me that I would like to tell the story of our baseball game, and I wish that you would write me the names of as many of those who took part as you can recollect. I am unable to recall all of them for certain, but will give you those I can.

"There must have been two nines—eighteen in all:

Yourself,	Myself,
General Terry,	Harry Lewis,
Mont Woodward,	J. B. Candee,
William E. Downs,	Arthur D. Osborne,
Dave Peck,	Clark from Hamden,
Dwight (was it not?),	Tall man, captain of Blues or Greys, whose name escapes me.

"Possibly Kellogg was there; I rather think he was; perhaps Wooster, Theodore Buell, and Major Bissell were, and I think John Woodruff was.

"Was Root, of the clock shop, one of them, and John C. Hollister another?

"If I am right about these, we have the eighteen, but as I cannot be positive, I wish that you would put on your thinking cap and complete the two nines. The game was played on the lot where the New Haven hospital now stands, was it not?

"Do you remember who were pitchers and who were catchers, or anything else about it which would be interesting to such a gathering?"

Mr. Sperry helped to complete the nines for him as follows:

"The tall man you mention must have been Captain Charles

disposition there is no doubt about the strictness with which he attended to business from the time he first entered public office; and the habits of those days remained with him to the end,—habits of patient, scrupulous, almost plodding industry. He began immediately to take an active part in politics. An Abolition Whig and Free-Soiler—his first vote had been cast for Van Buren in 1848—he undertook the work of extending the Abolition sentiment in the community. The lessons instilled in him in boyhood by the little band of friends of freedom in Judea were not forgotten. His arrival in Meriden almost coincided with the inception of the Kansas-Nebraska struggle, which colored national politics for the next decade, and it was inevitable that one so trained and so endowed should participate to the best of his endeavor in the political activities of his limited environment.[1]

T. Candee, the father of Everett Candee of the Street Railway Company. On the whole as I think the matter over perhaps Kellogg was a member. Wooster was not. Theodore Buell was not. Major Bissell was not. John Woodruff used to be with us once in a while and perhaps Root, of the clock shop, but they were not regular members. John C. Hollister was a member."

[1] The responsibilities of active political organization, which were undertaken elsewhere by the Free-Soil party, were assumed in Connecticut largely by the American party, which in the early days embodied the living Anti-Slavery spirit of the State. Mr. Platt accordingly became identified with the American movement, together with N. D. Sperry and a few other earnest young men who afterwards figured prominently in Republican politics. He became Chairman of the State Committee of the American party prior to 1856 and retained the chairmanship in 1856, working in harmony with the Republican State Committee when the State chose Fremont electors. A little later he became Chairman of the Republican State Committee and he was Secretary of State during the administration of Governor Holley in 1857–8, having previously served as clerk of the State Senate in 1855–6.

To Philip E. Howard of Philadelphia, who inquired about the

From that time until his election to the Senate, he was one of the most effective party workers in the State, and one of the best political organizers. He had a rare faculty of quiet control, and then, as later, his word went far. The story of his slow but steady growth in political favor during the twenty-eight years of his stay in Meriden, of the gradual expansion of his reputation and acquaintance to county and state limits, found its parallel on a national scale between the time of his election to the Senate and the enactment of the Platt amendment. From first to last, without self-advertising or spectacular devices, his development

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connection of Henry Clay Trumbull with Connecticut politics before the war, Mr. Platt wrote on September 1, 1904: "I remember the fact of Mr. Trumbull's activity in those times; remember to have heard him make political speeches, and some of the anecdotes with which they were interspersed, but my personal intercourse and friendship for him dates from rather a later period. I was originally a 'Know-Nothing' and belonged to what was called the 'American party,' so that at the organization of the Republican party the work was taken up by others. We supported Fremont with all our might in 1856. I had been Chairman of the American, or American-Union party, as we called ourselves prior to 1856, and perhaps in 1856 we had a double organization — I cannot remember—that is, two committees—and it is possible that I still retained the chairmanship of the American party in 1856, working in harmony with the State Committee of the Republican party, then just organized. We carried Connecticut in 1856 for Fremont, and I know that Mr. Trumbull was very active at that time. I cannot make it seem true that he was ever a member of a State committee of which I was chairman. After 1858 I was Chairman of the Republican State Committee for two or three years. Unfortunately, I have no memoranda or data from which I could refresh my recollection. My memory is of that peculiar kind that when a particular piece of work is accomplished, I put it one side and forget all about it until something occurs which makes it necessary for me to recall it. Others seem to have memory which retains the details of everything in which they have been engaged, or with which they have been connected."

was constantly upward and outward. Judge of Probate for Meriden; Clerk of State Senate; Chairman of American and Republican State committees; Secretary of State; member of Senate; member of State House of Representatives; Speaker of House of Representatives; State's Attorney for New Haven; United States Senator—the precise dates do not so much matter.

It was during his term as State Senator in 1861–2 that an incident occurred which brought him for the moment into a prominence which may not have been altogether agreeable. There was in Connecticut a pervasive Copperhead sentiment at the beginning of the War, just as there had been a pro-slavery sentiment there during the Kansas-Nebraska struggle, when one Connecticut Senator, Isaac Toucey, voted with the Democrats of the South against Salmon P. Chase's amendment to Douglas's Squatter Sovereignty bill: "Under which, the people of the Territory, through their appropriate representatives, may, if they see fit, prohibit the existence of slavery therein." Some of the leading Democrats of the State loudly vociferated their lack of sympathy with the steps taken to save the Union. William W. Eaton announced that, if any Massachusetts troops crossed Connecticut, they would have to do it over his dead body. One of the most prominent of the Copperheads was a former Governor of the State, Thomas H. Seymour. So far had the declarations of these men spread, that friends of the Union began to question whether a false impression would not go out to the country of the feeling of the State. Mr. Platt was one of the younger Senators, fired with the zeal of early convictions brought to white heat in the furnace of war. He felt that something

should be done to emphasize the loyalty of Connecticut, and—whether after consultation with others is not known—he introduced a resolution reciting the circumstances and providing that the portraits of Governor Seymour and Governor Toucey, which hung in the chamber with those of other Governors, should be turned to the wall. The resolution was adopted; some one dubbed the author of it "Picture Platt," and thus he was called for many years by the opposition press in the State. The incident he rarely referred to in after years, and the details of it seem to have passed out of his mind; but he felt that his action was fully justified.[1]

One of his earliest steps after establishing his home in Meriden, was to unite with the First Congregational Church. He continued this association until his death, although in the later years his connection was, necessarily, not active. He was a deacon of the church until he left for Washington, D. C. For a long time he conducted a Bible class, which was regarded as one of the institutions of the place, and to which many of the principal men and women of the town belonged. His teachings were marked by earnestness and common-sense, and some of his pupils say his exposition of the Scriptures often seemed inspired. He had no use for cant. His son recalls that once when he was home from college he dropped into his father's office, and they started for a walk. As they passed the church, evangelistic services were going on, and the father said, "Let 's go in." The evangelist was exhorting with

[1] "I think it was Thomas H. Seymour whose portrait was removed from the Senate chamber on my motion—that is my recollection of it,—and that years afterwards, when the War was over, it was brought back. The Democrats have never forgiven me for it and never will, and yet I think it was an entirely justifiable action."—Letter of O. H. Platt to A. H. Byington, January 29, 1903.

great fervor, calling down the terrors of eternal punishment; after he had been laying on the scourge for some time, he came down among the congregation, and started straight down the aisle to where the elder Platt was sitting at the head of a pew, with his legs crossed as usual. Throwing his arm over Mr. Platt's shoulder he asked, "My brother, are you a Christian?" The future Senator looked up slowly, without uncrossing his legs, and barely unclosing his lips—"If what you have been telling us is true about what is necessary to be a Christian and what is not," he said deliberately, "I don't think I am!"

Some of his most agreeable associations with Meriden grew out of his interest in Masonry. He was an early member of Meridian Lodge, No. 77, which dated from about the time of his arrival in the town, and later joined in the institution of St. Elmo Commandery, No. 9, K. T. Most of his closest friendships had their beginning there, and throughout his life he always made a point of being in Meriden if possible at the ceremonies on Good-Friday when his old companions got together. He delivered addresses on the fiftieth anniversary of Meridian Lodge and the twenty-fifth anniversary of St. Elmo Commandery, which bear the marks of careful preparation, and disclose a deep affection for the order to which he belonged.

Another connection dating from early days in Meriden was his membership in the Metabetchouan Fishing and Game Club, which had a fishing preserve in Canada comprising two hundred square miles of territory. He originally leased the preserve, as he used to explain, "in the days when I was young and foolish." He soon found that he could not get there often and that it was more than he could afford to keep up. So some of

A FLY-CASTING RAPID OF THE SHEPAUG RIVER

his friends took it off his hands, and formed a club, building a clubhouse in the unbroken forest, with camps on the lakes and rivers. Next to the Litchfield hills and the Adirondacks, he liked to go there, though it rarely happened that he could get so far away.

He was deeply concerned in the business development of his town. He was forever urging the advantage of establishing new industries, and this interest of his resulted not long before his election to the Senate in the one great financial setback of his life. A number of his local friends undertook to establish a cutlery concern and he became the counselling spirit in the enterprise, although he had little pecuniary interest in it. He worked hard to get it started, and the promoters came to him to go on their notes. He accommodated them without thinking how much paper he was putting his name to and got in beyond his depth. The concern failed and he found himself involved for nearly $25,000. He turned over all his own property and part of his wife's property to the creditors of the failed concern. While he was in the worst of his trouble he received from his brother Simeon, who was a farmer in Litchfield County, a good-sized check with the laconic memorandum: "Orville, use this." He returned the check with an equally laconic note: "Much obliged, Simeon, but I got myself into this mess, and I shall get out of it." But he never did quite get out of it. He went ahead strictly paying every dollar, giving his notes where he could not pay in cash, and taking them up as he found himself able to do so, but he carried the burden up to the day of his death, and some of the notes were cancelled only when it came to the settlement of his estate.

He was not a jury lawyer. He confined himself

almost entirely to patent, corporation, and real-estate law. Until 1875, he was alone in his office. Then he took into partnership his son James, recently graduated, and for many years the old sign, "O. H. & J. P. PLATT," remained on the office door. At the time of his election to the Senate, his practice was the most extensive in Meriden, and almost all the important manufacturing concerns in the town were among his clients. Every one had confidence in him. Every one was familiar with his tall figure sauntering up the street and felt free to go to him for help or sympathy. He was commonly known as "O. H." and few took the pains to call him by any other name.

The years of his stay in Meriden were not eventful, but they served to give him an acquaintance throughout the State which proved of value when he came before the Legislature for election to the Senate. He was called a good campaign speaker, and was in demand for political occasions in his own town and in others, so that people got in the habit of associating his name with Republican affairs. It was known among his friends that he had only one ambition. His service as Secretary of State in 1858, Speaker of the House of Representatives in 1867, and State's Attorney for New Haven between 1877 and 1879, came along in the ordinary course of politics. He could have been chosen Governor and might easily have been elected to Congress, but he did not care for either place. There was only one political office he wanted and that was the United States Senatorship. He thought that with his temperament and training he could do better work in the Senate than anywhere else, if he should ever have the opportunity. His chance came at last in the fall of 1878. For several years Connecticut had been in the control of

the Democratic party. W. W. Eaton, the "peace Democrat" of Civil War days, and William H. Barnum, afterwards Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, represented the State in the Senate, having taken the places made vacant by the death of Senators Buckingham and Ferry in 1875. Barnum's term was to expire on March 4, 1879, and the election of a Republican Legislature in 1878 opened the way for a Republican successor.

CHAPTER IV

THE MIDNIGHT CAUCUS

A Skilfully Conducted Canvass—The Midnight Caucus—Election to the Senate—Newspaper Criticism—Reception at Meriden.

THERE is no more interesting chapter in the political history of Connecticut than the story of the campaign for the Senatorship which culminated in the famous midnight caucus of January 16–17, 1879, and the selection of Mr. Platt as the Republican nominee. In general estimation, Gen. Joseph R. Hawley was easily the leading candidate, and outside the State it seems to have been assumed that he would be successful. He had acquired a wide reputation for independence and courage, was the one distinctly national character in the State, and was understood in some way to represent popular sentiment as against the scheming of professional politicians. He had a splendid record for bravery in the Civil War, to which he was recognized as one of the State's most notable contributions. He had been Governor of the State, Permanent Chairman of the Republican National Convention in 1868, a Presidential Elector in the same year, President of the Centennial Commission at Philadelphia in 1876. At the election of 1878, he had been chosen a member of the House of Representatives for the second time, after an interval of several years, having served one term in 1871 and 1872, and having twice suffered defeat. He was the

editor of the Hartford *Courant*, a strongly appealing personality both in the State and out.

Marshall Jewell likewise had a reputation extending beyond the limits of the State, of which he had been Governor for three terms. As Minister to Russia, and Postmaster-General under President Grant, as a conspicuous figure in Republican national conventions, as a member of the Republican National Committee, of which he became Chairman in the following year, he had many friends and adherents. He was strong especially among the active political workers, and, being regarded as their candidate, suffered accordingly.

Henry B. Harrison was one of the best-known lawyers in the State, frequently mentioned for important office, and was recognized as a high-minded man, from whom much was to be expected. Into this group of eminent men, the modest Meriden lawyer ventured to intrude himself as a competitor for the highest honor in the gift of the State. He had seemingly few qualities to commend him to the Legislature in preference to any one of the others. He was known, it is true, as a competent lawyer, as a political worker and organizer of proved astuteness, as an efficient public servant in the various positions in which he had served, and as a citizen of sterling worth; but it may be doubted, when his candidacy was announced, whether there were many who imagined he would be a serious factor, much less that he could secure the prize. He had one advantage which those who interested themselves in his candidacy regarded as a political asset. He had no enemies and nowhere in the State was there a politician of consequence who did not have a kindly feeling for him. Though he was the first choice of few, he was acceptable as a second choice to many.

Moreover, his friends figured that either of the two leading candidates, Hawley and Jewell, both living in Hartford, would prefer to see the Senatorship go to some one outside of Hartford if unable to get it himself. There was to be another vacancy at the end of two years, when the term of Senator Eaton expired, and the election of a Hartford man to the existing vacancy would be a serious handicap to any Hartford candidate in 1881. The nucleus of Mr. Platt's support was in his own town of Meriden, with its three representatives in the Legislature, H. Wales Lines in the Senate, and Samuel Dodd and James P. Platt in the House. A campaign committee was organized, consisting of H. Wales Lines, Charles L. Rockwell, Judge Levi E. Coe, John W. Coe, and William F. Graham. Friends of the candidate were assigned each to canvass a county in the State, while a score or more other Meriden men volunteered to help by visiting other towns and interviewing members-elect to the General Assembly. It was the plan of the little band of campaigners not to antagonize any of the other candidates, to stimulate and extend the friendly feeling already existing toward Mr. Platt in all parts of the State, to make him the second choice of as many members-elect as possible, so that when the time came for either Hawley or Jewell supporters to look for another candidate, they would naturally turn to Platt. Thus his canvass progressed unobtrusively, but with gradually accumulating interest, until a few days before the time for the Republican caucus. By that time the committee had some twenty-five votes on which they thought they could count—at least for sympathetic support, and friends of other candidates began to figure on the Platt following as something to be seriously

considered. At the beginning of the canvass, Mr. Platt had instructed his managers that they should make no trades, bargains, or combines of any kind with any one. Those instructions were faithfully carried out. A few days before the caucus, however, some of Mr. Platt's friends became anxious. There were rumors of bargains and agreements. One proposition was made, that the Platt support should go to one of the other candidates on condition that Mr. Platt should be chosen Senator two years later; in the meantime, the son James Platt to be appointed judge on the State bench, which was his ambition. All these suggestions were rejected, but word was carried to the candidate of what was going on, with a suggestion that he ought to be in Hartford. A few hours before the caucus, Mr. Lines, the Chairman of the Platt Campaign Committee, received the following dispatch at Hartford:

New Haven, Connecticut,
January 14th.

To Honorable H. Wales Lines,
Senator Sixth District.

My duties here make it impossible for me to give direction or even thought to the senatorial matter. I leave it entirely with you and the Meriden representatives, with these suggestions: Make no combinations or bargains, and entertain no proposals for anything. Let no friend of mine disparage any other candidate. Put the argument solely on what you may think of me, my ability to represent the State, and the best interests of the Republican party.

O. H. Platt.

The message was hardly needed, for it was in line with what Mr. Platt's managers had understood his wishes to be. It was not made public until some time after

the caucus, and then it helped to contribute to the satisfaction with which the people of the State were learning to contemplate the outcome of the contest.

The caucus began at eight o'clock and remained continually in session until 2:27 the next morning. Interest was intense. Former speaker Bugbee of Killingly was made chairman because his preference was unknown. Hawley's friends were anxious for nominating speeches; but supporters of the other candidates at a meeting before the caucus decided that no speeches should be made, and their wishes prevailed. On the first ballot, which is designated in the newspaper reports as "informal" but which is said by some who were there not to have differed in character from the others, Hawley had 49 votes; Jewell 35; Platt 24; Harrison 14; W. T. Minor of Stamford 14; P. T. Barnum 10. Platt's strong showing on this ballot was a surprise to all except his friends. It was known that there were three, and probably five who would stand by him until his election or defeat. Three of these came from Meriden. There is some question as to the identity of the others; but honors lie with two of the following names: Senator Lyman W. Coe and Representative Bradley R. Agard of Torrington, and Representative Henry Gay of Winchester. Some who were primarily for Platt favored Hawley as second choice and when they saw the Jewell vote increasing on subsequent ballots they became alarmed lest Jewell should be nominated and transferred their votes to Hawley. So it came about that as ballot after ballot was taken, the Platt showing fell steadily till, on the eighth formal ballot, it reached the dauntless five, and there for three ballots it stuck, while the Harrison strength slowly grew, and Hawley's

on the ninth and tenth ballots bounded to seventy-one, within five votes of the nominating point.

On the tenth formal ballot, Hawley had 71 votes, Jewell 51, Harrison 23, and Platt 5. On the eleventh ballot, Hawley had 64, Jewell 53, Harrison 21, and Platt 10. From that time the Platt strength showed a gradual increase, Harrison's fell away, the Jewell votes disintegrated ballot after ballot, and the Hawley support fluctuated. It was evident that the Jewell managers, at the head of whom was William H. Hayward of Colchester, were trying to effect combinations first with the Harrison, and then with the Platt contingents, so as to prevent the success of Hawley, who was approaching dangerously close to the nomination. The game was skilfully played. Enough votes were thrown to one candidate and another to sustain the contest, but the transfer of strength was so gradual as not to precipitate a rush to Hawley. At midnight, the nineteenth ballot stood: Hawley 60; Jewell 42; Platt 25; Harrison 16; S. W. Kellogg 5; Barnum 2. So it went on for eleven more ballots, when, for the first time, Platt forged ahead to second place: Hawley 63; Platt 39; Jewell 37; Harrison 10. The thirty-third ballot gave Hawley 66; Platt 61; Jewell 18; Harrison 7. On the thirty-fourth ballot, Platt leaped to first place, with 74 votes; Hawley 72; Jewell 3; Harrison 2. He gained one vote from Hawley on the thirty-fifth ballot, so that he was within one vote of the nomination, and on the thirty-sixth ballot the longed for vote came.[1] Just where it came from has ever since been a source of friendly dispute among the politicians of the State. There are living to-day at least a dozen men, each of whom can relate with circumstantial detail how it

[1] The full record of the balloting in the midnight caucus follows:

happened—how he delivered that missing vote. It is no part of this history to settle the dispute, although one incident may be recorded. That Marcus E. Baldwin of Woodbridge was one of those who cast his vote for Platt for the first time on the decisive ballot, appears from the proceedings of the meeting at Meriden held the night after Mr. Platt's election by the Legislature, when Mr. Baldwin was introduced facetiously, by Senator Lines, as "one of the men who, when he came

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INFORMAL BALLOT

Joseph R. Hawley,	Hartford,	49
Marshall Jewell,	Hartford,	35
Orville H. Platt,	Meriden,	24
Henry B. Harrison,	New Haven,	14
William T. Minor,	Stamford,	14
P. T. Barnum,	Bridgeport,	10
Charles B. Andrews,	Litchfield,	1
Benjamin Douglas,	Middletown,	1
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FORMAL BALLOTS

	1st	2d	3d	4th	5th	6th
Hawley	55	59	62	63	61	67
Jewell	39	43	43	46	49	47
Platt	25	20	19	22	15	13
Harrison	13	14	18	17	25	21
Barnum	9	7	4	1		
Minor	7	5	4			

	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th
Hawley	65	67	71	71	64	65
Jewell	50	50	46	51	53	52
Platt	9	5	5	5	10	16
Harrison	24	28	28	23	21	16

	13th	14th	15th	16th	17th	18th
Hawley	61	64	59	59	59	58
Jewell	48	46	41	39	36	33
Platt	23	26	29	25	28	29
Harrison	18	14	20	18	18	16
Chas. B. Andrews.			1	5	3	1
S. W. Kellogg				2	4	4
Barnum				1	1	6
Minor						1

to Mr. Platt, never left him until he was elected." Mr. Baldwin had been a Harrison man from the beginning, although he was an intimate associate of many of Mr. Platt's friends. The representatives from New Haven County were in the habit of running up to Hartford every day on the same train, and there was much good-natured chaffing back and forth. Baldwin was especially vehement in support of Harrison, declaring that he should vote for Harrison "first, last, and all the

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FORMAL BALLOTS

	19th	20th	21st	22d	23d
Hawley	60	60	58	61	60
Jewell	42	45	47	47	46
Platt	25	26	28	28	24
Harrison	16	14	17	14	12
Kellogg	5	4	1		
Barnum	2				
Lyman D. Brewster		2			
W. T. Minor		1	1		
	(11.45 P.M.)				

	24th	25th	26th	27th	28th
Hawley	67	65	62	62	57
Jewell	47	43	41	41	40
Platt	25	29	31	31	33
Harrison	11	12	17	16	12

	29th	30th	31st	32d	33d
Hawley	63	63	64	64	66
Jewell	40	37	34	26	18
Platt	36	39	43	51	61
Harrison	12	9	8	9	7

	34th	35th	36th
Hawley	72	71	72
Jewell	3	3	1
Platt	74	75	76
Harrison	2	2	

Two ballots were declared void, as more votes were cast than there were present in the caucus.

time." Finally James P. Platt said to him: "I 'm a pretty good Platt man, but I 'll tell you what I 'll do. If the time ever comes when my vote will nominate Harrison, you can have it. But you must agree that if the time ever comes when your vote will nominate Platt, you will give it." "Agreed," said Baldwin, and neither thought of the incident again till just before the decisive ballot. James Platt had noticed the two persistent votes for Harrison, and it flashed across his mind where one of them came from; he went over to Baldwin, and asked him if he remembered the conversation on the train going up from Meriden. "I do," replied Baldwin. "Well," said young Platt, "this is the time and this is the place." Baldwin cast his vote for Platt. At 2.30 A.M., the result of the thirty-sixth formal ballot was announced: Platt 76; Hawley 72; Jewell 1, and Platt was nominated. On January 21st, the election took place in joint assembly of the Legislature. It resulted: Platt 139; Barnum 94; scattering 1; not voting 10.

The nomination when it came was a surprise to the successful candidate. He spent the eventful night in Meriden, remaining in the telegraph office until midnight, and during the early evening he received frequent despatches from Hartford. When his vote fell off to five, he gave it up and went to bed and to sleep. After the caucus adjourned, the Meriden campaigners caught the first train for home and drove up from the station to the house in the early morning. They all ran upstairs, where they found Platt asleep. They woke him up, John Coe shouting, "Get up there, you old United States Senator!" but they could not get Platt to believe it until he had heard the whole story of the caucus to the end.

It would be agreeable to set down here that the action

of the midnight caucus was received with approbation everywhere. The truth is, however, that for a time there was a feeling of disappointment, which found expression, thinly veiled, in many of the newspapers within the State and openly in most of those without. Popular fancy seems to have fixed itself upon General Hawley, which was not at all to be wondered at, and failing him, there were several names which would have appealed to it before the one which for the first time now challenged its attention. General Hawley came forward handsomely in the shadow of personal disappointment, in a short editorial paragraph which appeared in the Hartford *Courant* of the following morning, and which must have been written within the hour of the announcement of his defeat. It is possible that what he wrote served as an introduction of Mr. Platt to many of the people of Connecticut, as it did to all beyond the borders of the State. General Hawley could not refrain from alluding gently to "the influences that caused the various changes in the balloting," but he added:

Mr. Platt is fifty-one years old, a native of Washington, Litchfield County, an able lawyer, at present Attorney for the State in New Haven County. His first prominent appearance in public life was as Secretary of State in 1857–8, during Governor Holley's administration. In 1861–2 he was a Senator from the sixth district; in 1864 and 1869 he was in the House, the latter year being elected Speaker.

He is a gentleman of most honorable character, sound judgment, well-balanced mind, familiarity with political affairs, and much sagacity in conducting them. He is sound in principle, an Anti-Slavery man and Republican from his boyhood, a good hard-money man and sure to have convictions and follow them. This much his chief competi-

tor takes pleasure in writing hastily at the late hour which announces his nomination.

Other newspapers printed slighting comments which their authors lived to regret, and there were fugitive suggestions in Democratic journals that the Democrats in the Legislature should combine with a minority of Republicans to elect Hawley, who of course would not have tolerated such a thing. Two years later, in 1881, he was unanimously nominated by the Republican caucus, was elected Senator, and served by Platt's side for nearly twenty-five years.

Among Mr. Platt's neighbors, and among those who knew him, the feeling toward him was cordial and appreciative. The New Haven *Union* said:

O. H. Platt holds high rank in the estimation of the people of Meriden, among whom he has lived and worked these twenty-seven years, and bears a public and private character beyond reproach. He is a deacon in the First Congregational Church with which he has been connected since the Reverend W. H. H. Murray[1] preached there, and he is forward in all Christian work in his adopted town. A man of few words, of fewer promises, and stern unyielding will, he rarely fails a friend in need or turns back from the path he has marked out for himself. He is pre-eminently noted for two things: unselfishness, in political as well as social life, and true earnestness. As a friend remarked: "He has not a selfish bone in his body. The best years of his life he has devoted to others, and that is one reason he is to-day a poor man."

The friends and neighbors in Meriden deferred their greeting until after the formal action of the Legis-

[1] Mr. Murray did not preach in Meriden until 1864, some years after Mr. Platt became a member of the Church. He had earlier preached in the Church at Judea for a little while.

lature had set the seal of certainty upon the choice of the caucus. On the night following the election, there was a reception at the Meriden house, with illuminations and a midnight supper. There had been no formal preparations, but the crowds were dense, and for two hours men of every calling assured the newly elected Senator of their good-will. In the midst of the reception "Neighbor Platt" was led to the platform where he spoke a few characteristically simple words:

I thank you, my friends, for this kind reception. This is neither the time nor the place to make a speech, and yet I think I would be lacking in the common feeling of humanity if I did not express to you in some way the thanks I feel for the respect you have ever shown me. It touches me, coming as it does from you men who have known me longest and best—the men I have lived with these twenty-eight years. I have lived a somewhat transparent life. You know what I have done and what I have failed to do. It is that that makes this demonstration the more acceptable and touching to me. I think no man could have lived in a place so long and been more sensible of the kindly feeling entertained toward him than I. I want to thank all my friends, but especially my Meriden friends. They were not politicians, but were full of love and devotion, and labored for my welfare without hope of reward; and such kindly feeling and disposition touches me to the heart. Their faith makes me rejoice more at their gratification than my success. As I meet you here and have met you elsewhere, so shall I be pleased to meet you at all times. I shall be glad to meet you at any time or place—glad to meet the kind friends whose memory I shall always cherish. Just now everything is new and seems unreal. I can scarcely appreciate the future. How I shall bear myself, how I shall walk in the new path in which I am set, time will show. I do know that I shall try to do right as I see the right and I have faith to believe that this will bring me

through to the end without discredit to you, to myself, or to the State. My friends, this is no place for an announcement of my political views. I have in the course of my life dealt and received many hard political blows, but I have always tried to act right and shall so continue. I thank you again for your kindness, and I trust that all your expectations with reference to me will not be disappointed. Good-night.[1]

[1] At the supper which followed the reception, there were many complimentary speeches from members of the General Assembly and friends. A dispatch was read from Mr. Platt's old teacher, F. W. Gunn, as follows:

"WASHINGTON, CONNECTICUT,
January 22d.

"TO MAYOR LINES:

"Washington, the place of his birth and growth to manhood, joins with Meriden, the home of his mature life and active labor, in congratulations upon the election of Honorable O. H. Platt as a Senator of the United States—'An honest man 's the noblest work of God.'"

After this, Mr. Platt was called to his feet again. The rest of the proceedings may be described in the words of the Meriden *Daily Republican* the following day:

"Mr. Platt rose and made one of those earnest, thoughtful, ringing speeches that took his own townsmen, who heard him, back to the grand speeches he made in Town Hall in the presidential and other campaigns, when the services of our best and most powerful men were required on the political platform. He began by referring to the senatorial contest just closed, and how deeply he felt the responsibilities of the new duties to which he was called. In endeavoring to discharge them, he would be guided solely by what he had always considered a safe rule to follow, and had made the rule of his life—doing what he believed to be right. To say that he was gratified at being surrounded by so many of his immediate neighbors and good personal friends did not express how he felt, and if any one thing more than another gave him special gratification, it was to know that his old friends of years ago, in the home of his boyhood, Litchfield County, were rejoicing at his election. Another source of gratification to him was that his four competitors were gentlemen whom he was proud to call his friends, and he knew of no four gentlemen whom he would more freely call on for a personal favor, than on Joe Hawley, H. B. Harrison,

Marshall Jewell, and Governor Minor. And he was glad to observe that Connecticut had such noble men to select a Senator from, for had either been elected, the State would have been honored, and the principles of the Republican party faithfully vindicated. Mr. Platt then went on to say that he rejoiced that no friend of his, in the most heated hour of the campaign, had dropped an unkind or offensive word toward any of these gentlemen. Had they done so, it would have been painful to him. He felt that had either been elected instead of himself, they might have brought more ability to the discharge of the duties of the position, but none of them could exhibit a greater desire to do right. It was the desire to do right that signalized the victory and achievements of the Republican party, and, knowing of that desire, he was proud to have been identified with that party of progress since its birth. It was the determination to do right that lifted politics from the mire, and nerved conscientious men to become politicians.

"Mr. Platt then reviewed the Republican party and the previous parties of which it is an outgrowth, covering a period of thirty years, every year of which was devoted by the Republican party and its predecessors with similar principles to contending for the rights of man. He liked the Republican party because it made these rights of man its cardinal principle, and because it did so, he was a Republican, and he could sincerely say that in all his active participation in Republican campaigns, he never thought of self, never sought nor cared for political place, his ambition being to lift the Republican party to a plane where the rights and equality of man would be recognized all over the land, and that a free ballot would be cast, whether in South Carolina or Connecticut. 'This must be and shall be accomplished,' said Mr. Platt. 'With that principle to contend for, the party contending for it cannot fail.' Mr. Platt then deprecated in strong words the use of money in elections. It provoked him, he said, when he heard it said that campaigns could not be carried on without a lavish or corrupt expenditure of money. The falsity of the assertion has been demonstrated, and he was thankful that it had been demonstrated by the Republican party. Mr. Platt, after dwelling on this point at some length, referred to the currency question, remarking that like all other issues of the day it had only two sides, right and wrong, and he firmly believed that the man who was right was he who advocated a currency that would have a standard value all over the world, without being subjected to daily fluctuations. He stood there, and he believed the great mass of the Republican party stood there. Mr. Platt closed by recognizing the distinguished honor and privilege of representing Connecticut in the councils

of the nation. He loved Connecticut because it was his native State and he had grown with its growth. He had proudly watched its progress, not only in the pursuits of the sturdy farmer, but in its manufacturing interests, which had increased little by little, until every railroad and stream was dotted with a manufactory, a tribute to the thrift of the commonwealth—a commonwealth that had in it many of the sons and daughters of the passengers of the *Mayflower*, whose puritanical blood was a certain protection against all vague 'isms' and socialistic and communistic ideas and heresies that were seeking a place in New England. In Connecticut they would make no headway. Mr. Platt resumed his seat amid a storm of applause.

"At the close of Mr. Platt's remarks, Mr. Worthington took the floor voluntarily and said the election of Mr. Platt was a cause for more than usual gratification, because it was accomplished without expenditure of a cent for liquor of any kind, or for any other corrupt purpose. It proved that Mr. Platt was true to the principle of total abstinence, and he would therefore propose, in cold water, the health of Honorable Orville H. Platt. The whole company rose, and with glasses raised, duly responded, after which the company separated."

The following day the new Senator went to Hartford to meet the members of the Legislature. The Meriden *Republican* gave a naïvely interesting picture of the event:

"For the first time since its completion, Senator Platt was in the State Capitol to-day. He went up from here on the nine o'clock train and took his accustomed seat in the smoking-car. It soon became generally known on the train that the new Senator was on board. Many came from other cars and carelessly passed by to get a good, square look at the man of whom they had heard so much the past few days.

"Arriving at Hartford, Senator Platt strolled leisurely over the Capitol, accompanied by Senator Lines and Representative Platt, son of the Senator. At the Capitol the Senator was conducted to the governor's room, where Governor Andrews gave him a cordial greeting. The new Capitol was then looked over, and Senator Platt commented on the beauty of the work and paid many compliments to the fidelity of the Capitol Commissioners. Soon after the House convened, the news was circulated that Senator Platt was in the building and a general desire to see him was expressed. Speaker Wright sent a friend of Senator Platt to him to know if he would not present himself in the House, if sent for, after official recognition of his presence in the Capitol was announced. Senator Platt sent back word that he preferred to have no formality, but that he would drop into the House just before adjournment and

see how many faces he knew there and how many knew him. On Speaker Wright being informed of Mr. Platt's wishes, Mr. P. T. Barnum, who was conversing with the Speaker at the time, said that would never do.

" 'The new Senator must show himself and give us all a good look at the man we voted for.' A few minutes later, as the House was about to adjourn, Senator Platt entered, accompanied by his son, and both sat at the latter's desk, and Speaker Wright at once went to Mr. Platt. Then P. T. Barnum arose from his desk and said: 'Mr. Speaker: This House has always been running me and remarking upon their desire to see my show. But I think we have with us what will please them more than anything I could present. I understand our distinguished Senator-elect, Orville H. Platt, is in this House, and I move you, sir, that he be invited to the Speaker's desk, that we all have the pleasure of looking on his genial face.' Speaker Wright conducted Senator Platt to the desk and declared a recess of five minutes. Senator Platt, on rising, was received with deafening applause, again and again repeated. He said:

" 'You can scarcely expect me to say hardly more than to tender to you my acknowledgment for what you have done in selecting me to represent the State of Connecticut, in the Senate of the United States. Others might have been chosen who would represent you more ably, but no man, I am sure, can bring to the service a more ardent love for the State than I. I think I know something of the people of this State, of its industries and wants, and certainly I shall try to faithfully represent its people, its industries, and its wants. I have seen its manufacturing interests grow from the smallest beginnings, until now manufacturing interests dot every railroad and stream in the State. I have seen its wealth trebled, and its population vastly increase. I think I know something of its people, and as much as I admire the people of other States I do think that there is more of the loyal spirit and character which distinguished those who came over on the *Mayflower* than can be found in any other State, in its institutions and its people; and God helping me, I never shall be recreant to the trust you have committed to me.'

"Senator Platt was loudly applauded at the close and soon left the House. He visited the Senate Chamber and engaged in social conversation with the Senators who invited him to their private room off the Senate, where a pleasant hour was spent. The Senator during the afternoon called on several personal friends in Hartford, each of whom most cordially congratulated him and declared themselves not only satisfied, but well pleased with his election. The visit was a very pleasant one to the Senator-elect."

CHAPTER V

A LOOKER-ON IN THE SENATE

First Experiences at Washington—The Forty-Sixth Congress—Eulogy of Rush Clark.

THE newly created Senator was given little time to prepare himself for the opportunity thrust into his hand. His election had taken place in the closing days of the last session of the Forty-fifth Congress, when the situation growing out of differences between President Hayes and the Democratic leaders at the capital resulted in a filibuster which prevented the passage of two great supply bills, the Army Appropriation bill and the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial. President Hayes, accordingly, was compelled on the 4th of March to issue a call for a special session of the Forty-sixth Congress, to meet on March 18, 1879. Mr. Platt was hurried into his new duties at Washington. He bade good-bye to the old scenes at Meriden with a feeling of regret, looking toward the future without elation, yet without self-distrust. His old friend John Coe drove him to the station the day he left Meriden to go to Washington. Little was said by either until just as they were about to part, when Mr. Platt remarked slowly:

"John, I 'm going to the United States Senate; you won't hear much of a fellow named Platt for some

years. I 'm going to listen and learn, and I won't begin to talk until I stand for something."

Mr. Platt took his seat on the first day of the session. Among those who appeared at the presiding officer's desk with him to take the oath of office were William B. Allison of Iowa, Matt. H. Carpenter of Wisconsin, Roscoe Conkling of New York, John J. Ingalls of Kansas, John A. Logan of Illinois, Justin S. Morrill of Vermont, George H. Pendleton of Ohio, Daniel W. Voorhees of Indiana, John P. Jones of Nevada, Wade Hampton of South Carolina, Zebulon B. Vance of North Carolina, and George G. Vest of Missouri. Of these, all except Vance, Pendleton, Hampton, and Vest had seen previous service. Other members of the Senate with whom Mr. Platt found himself associated were John T. Morgan of Alabama, A. H. Garland of Arkansas, Newton Booth of California, Henry M. Teller of Colorado, Thomas F. Bayard and Eli Saulsbury of Delaware, Benjamin H. Hill of Georgia, David Davis of Illinois, Joseph E. McDonald of Indiana, Samuel J. Kirkwood of Iowa, Preston B. Plumb of Kansas, James B. Beck of Kentucky, William Pitt Kellogg of Louisiana, James G. Blaine and Hannibal Hamlin of Maine, Henry L. Dawes and George F. Hoar of Massachusetts, Zachariah Chandler and Thomas W. Ferry of Michigan, William Windom of Minnesota, Blanche K. Bruce and L. Q. C. Lamar of Mississippi, Francis M. Cockrell of Missouri, Allen G. Thurman of Ohio, Henry B. Anthony and Ambrose E. Burnside of Rhode Island. With some of these men, Allison, Morrill, Vest, Teller, Hoar, and Cockrell, he had associations almost throughout his political career.

With the scrupulous regard for seniority and precedent which characterizes the procedure of the Senate, he

was placed at the tail-end of three committees—none of the first importance—Pensions, Patents, and the Select Committee to investigate and report the best means of preventing the introduction and spread of epidemic diseases. All committees were in control of the Democratic majority, so that there was little which the least important member of the minority could be expected to accomplish.[1]

It is not to be wondered at that little was heard from the country lawyer, unexpectedly elevated to the United States Senate, taking his seat within two months of his election. In this first session, lasting from March 18th, to July 1st, and monopolized by a bitter partisan discussion of the use of Federal troops at the polls, it is recorded that he introduced two bills for the relief of constituents and that he spoke six times. His entire activities during the session are covered in thirty-four lines of the Congressional Record. His first forensic appearance in the Senate occurred in the course of a

[1] The composition of these committees was as follows:

PENSIONS: Withers (chairman), McPherson, Groome, Call, Farley, Ingalls, Bruce, Kellogg, Platt.

PATENTS: Kernan (chairman), Coke, Slater, Call, Booth, Hoar, Platt.

EPIDEMIC DISEASES: Harris (chairman), Lamar, Garland, Jonas, Paddock, Sharon, Platt.

Late in the session Mr. Hoar withdrew from the Select Committee to inquire into alleged frauds in the late elections, of which he was the last member, and Mr. Platt took his place. His seniors on this committee were Wallace (chairman), Bailey, Garland, McDonald, Kernan, Teller, Cameron of Wisconsin, and Kirkwood.

At a late stage of the session a committee was appointed to consider a bill introduced by Senator Pendleton to provide that the principal officers of each of the executive departments might occupy seats on the floor of the Senate and House of Representatives, and Mr. Platt was placed at the end of this committee, which had the following membership: Pendleton, Voorhees, Bayard, Butler, Farley, Conkling, Allison, Blaine, Ingalls, Platt.

speech by his colleague, Mr. Eaton, on the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Appropriation bill. It is given as a matter of history:

MR. EATON: I want to say here, and my colleague will agree with me, that in nearly every town in Connecticut no matter which party is in power, not in all towns, but in most, a fair share of the jurors is given to the weaker party. It is so in my own town always. So it is with justices of the peace.

MR. PLATT: Will my colleague permit me to interrupt him?

MR. EATON: Certainly.

MR. PLATT: That ought to be the case, but there are far too many towns in the State where it is not the case.

MR. EATON: I know it is the case to a certain extent.

Not a sensational or dramatic entrance upon a public career! The assurance given John Coe on the drive to the station at Meriden was in a fair way to verification.

During his second session he was not much more active. He is credited with making "remarks" on thirty different occasions. Most of them were casual and related either to the business of the Committees on Pensions and Patents of which he was a member, or the needs of some constituent. Whenever he interjected an inquiry or a comment it was in the direction of economy and regular procedure. But he took advantage of an opportunity to declare himself briefly on at least one important question of public policy. Shortly after the Christmas recess he introduced the following joint resolution, which was ordered to lie on the table:

"*Whereas*, An improved and cheaper maritime communication between the Atlantic and Pacific seaboards of the United States by means of a ship-canal through some

portion of the Central American isthmus has become important to the commercial interests of this country; and

Whereas, Congress deems it to be necessary and expedient that the national and public interests in such a communication should be secured, rather than merely private and speculative ends: Therefore,

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives, etc., That the President be requested, if he shall deem it expedient, to communicate to the governments of the principal maritime nations of Europe the desire of this Government to secure such public interests, and to invite the co-operation of such governments in the selection of a route of isthmus ship-transit, which shall be found to subserve most largely the general interests of all the maritime nations, and also to communicate to such governments the desire of the Government to come to a mutual understanding with reference to the neutrality of such an interoceanic transit when it shall have been opened by the enterprise and capital of their respective citizens.

This resolution he succeeded in getting referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations two months later, but that was as far as it went. He lived to take part in all the legislation which resulted ultimately in the digging of the Isthmian Canal.

During this session also, Mr. Platt performed for the first time a duty which he was called upon many times to repeat during his twenty-six years of service—a delicate and difficult duty in which he always showed rare taste and feeling. On the death of Rush Clark, a Representative from Iowa, in the preceding spring, he had been appointed a member of the committee to accompany the body to the grave, and he was asked to take part in the memorial exercises in the Senate early in February. What he said should be recorded here, not only for its excellence, but because it afforded

Mr. Platt his first opportunity to address the Senate in any but the briefest possible way:

The grave has at least one feature which somewhat modifies its gloom. There a man is truly judged by his fellows. The sharp antagonisms, the unjust judgments of life are buried there, before the coffin is lowered, and the abilities, the impress, and the true character of the one who is to be its occupant are there justly acknowledged.

The courtesies of the grave are accorded to all, but men do not there deceive themselves or others in the estimate which they place upon the life of a fallen comrade. There you may learn his true history, his innermost life, his true character. At the home of Rush Clark, from the moment we reached the station till the last sad rites had been tenderly and lovingly performed, the evidences of a great sorrow pervading the entire community were unmistakable. At the very borders of the State which he had adopted as his own, we were made to feel that his influence had extended beyond the limits of the district which he more immediately represented, and that the whole State mourned for one of its truest and noblest men. All along the route to the beautiful city which had been the scene of his more active labors, we were met by strong, true men, who grieved as if the deceased had been a brother. I shall never forget the hour of our arrival at Iowa City. It was night, but the whole population had gathered to pay its tribute of respect to the dead, to testify its sympathy for the bereaved. The saddened faces of the people, seen in the light of the torches which were to guide us; the whispered orders for the disposition of his remains; the tears which fell from the eyes of sturdy men, all spoke most emphatically of the character of the man and of the place he had won for himself in the hearts of all. If deep sorrow could have restored him to life he would have lived again. It was an hour to be remembered always, and its impressions were intensified by the obsequies of the next day, when a

vast concourse gathered to attend with uncovered heads the impressive funeral ceremonies, and to follow in long procession to the tomb all that was left of him who had been their reliance and pride. Neither the falling rain nor the sharp thunder could deter those who honored him from the performance in minutest detail of the last solemn rites. So he was laid away to rest in the beautiful cemetery just outside of and overlooking the city he had chosen for his home. How apprcpriately such a resting place is called "God's acre." There we buried him, in the early spring-time, when the opening bud, the sprouting grain, and the springing grass were nature's assurances of the life to come.

CHAPTER VI

DEVELOPMENT OF A LAWMAKER

Growth in the Senate—Personal Characteristics

TO those who look back now upon his service in the Senate it is plain that the traits which later gave him his peculiar hold were his in the beginning. From first to last there was a steady, even growth in qualities which make a well-poised legislator, and the germs were there at the outset in his patient industry, sound judgment, and rectitude. He liked to go slow and be sure; he was honest in his speech and in his mental processes; it has been said of him that he thought on oath. His early years in the Senate were marked by faithful attention to the duties of his place, by quiet observation of what was going on, by contented acceptance of responsibilities which gradually lengthening service brought upon him. Little known at the time of his election, he felt bound to justify it by being as good a Senator as he could. So he worked ploddingly on the committees of which he was a member until he mastered the business of each and investigated with scrupulous minuteness every question that came up to him. He could not rest contented with a thing half done, and his satisfaction came in the performance rather than in the resulting praise. "I have no ambitions," he wrote once; "what I do, I do because it is set me to do, and I have a feeling that I ought to do

it as thoroughly and as well as I can. That is about all of it"; and again: "There is a scriptural text somewhere in which Christ says of a woman, 'She hath done what she could.' I have never had any other motive." In pronouncing a eulogy on Senator Gear of Iowa, he unconsciously came very near describing himself:

> All types of our people find their representatives here, and it is well that it is so. Men of commanding intellect, genius, eloquence, and brilliancy are both needed and found in these senatorial seats, but other men equally representing the people and equally useful, who do not attract popular enthusiasm by reason of any unusual or striking gifts, are quite as much needed here—men of strong good sense, men of affairs, of great industry, and unswerving devotion to the principles and the interests of the Republic; men whose general characteristics can best be described by three grand words—sturdy, faithful, and true. Senator Gear was such a man. Sometimes I think I would rather it should be written on my tombstone, "He was sturdy, faithful, and true," than to have it written, "he was eloquent, learned, and great."

Thus he went from session to session and term to term, a little broader and stronger each year, a little more confident in himself, a little better understood. Gradually he became known among his brother Senators as one who could always be relied upon, who had no axes of his own to grind, and who thought and acted truthfully. It was not long before they found out that he was a good lawyer and that his judgment was always sure to be nearly right. In the intimate association which comes from continued service in a comparatively small body they grew to trust him and to like him. He made no enemies in the Senate, any more than in Meriden; and he did in the Senate exactly as in Meriden,

except that the things he had to do and the questions he had to study carried a wider range. He had no fads. He did not delude himself with the notion that he was clothed with a mission. He attended to each day's work religiously, and when one task was completed he laid it aside to take up another. To every question big or little he gave the same painstaking conscientious consideration, and tried to get at the kernel of truth in it no matter how tough the rind, without giving a thought to whether getting at it would increase his reputation or not. He used to be in his place whenever the Senate was in session, and those who had questionable measures in hand learned to dread his slowly spoken "Let that go over." Sometimes he was called a "watch-dog of the Treasury," but he did not like the name and it did not fairly belong to him. He was not an indiscriminate objector, but he wanted the Senate to know what it was doing before it passed a bill. So it came about that Senators got in the way of going to him for information and advice, and of saying among themselves, "What does Platt think of it?" before making up their minds. Years before he gained much reputation outside the Senate chamber, he was regarded there as one of the most effective men in public life. When he died, Senator Cullom, who had served with him more than twenty years, expressed of him an opinion to which every other Senator would doubtless give assent:

Senator Platt was capable in more ways to do what the exigencies of the day from time to time put upon him, than any other man in the Senate. He was always at his post of duty,—always watchful in caring for the interests of the country, always just and fair to all alike, and was always careful and conservative in determining

what his duty should be in the disposition of any public question; and his judgment was a little more exactly right than that of any other Senator.

It was only natural that he should be entrusted with work of steadily increasing importance as time went by. When Congress was ready for Federal supervision of railroads, he had been eight years a Senator and by common consent he was assigned to the special committee having that question in hand. When at the beginning of the tariff agitation of 1887 the Finance Committee were looking for help, they turned intuitively to Platt, because he was painstaking, thorough, and dependable, and even before the way was open to make him formally a member of the committee he was one of the props of the majority in everything relating to tariff and finance; when they were looking for somebody whom they could trust in the devious windings of Indian legislation, their eyes fell easily upon Platt; when the Judiciary Committee wanted a sane, careful, and tactful associate, they thought first of Platt; and every added responsibility he assumed without eagerness or protest, regardless of whether the new duties were likely to be congenial or not. He never pressed his claims for assignment to any particular committee, but was willing to let the regular processes of the Senate work in their own way. He was considerate of the feelings of others and never blocked the path of his more ambitious associates. So in course of years he gained authority among his fellows, begotten of understanding and confidence, and when the war with Spain came on with its weighty questions to be solved, the Senate turned to him with general assent as one well qualified to help in their solution. That his name should have

been attached to the Platt Amendment and so become familiar everywhere was merely an incident; for his work in relation to the Platt Amendment was in line with what he had been doing right along, service which was valued by those who kept track of legislation, but which, owing to his own indifference to contemporary fame, never brought him the popular recognition he deserved. Had the Platt Amendment never been framed, he would have had a high place in the records of the Senate just the same.

He was no orator. He had no faculty for rousing enthusiasm, and was quite lacking in the personal magnetism which sways men in masses and which his colleague Hawley had in such generous measure. Public speaking had no glitter or charm for him. It was rarely that he experienced the responsive tingle that comes from popular applause. He regretted his own shortcoming as he acknowledged Hawley's gift; but he never disclosed a trace of envy because Hawley had what he did not possess. He has been described as sitting in the Senate, almost lounging in his chair, which for years was in the front row directly under the eye of the presiding officer, his head often thrown back as if half asleep, or bent forward over his desk as though he were thinking of other things. But the questions he asked or the suggestions he made from time to time showed that he was following closely what was going on. When he rose to speak, he used slowly to stretch his arms over the desk, unbend his legs, and get to his feet by degrees, as if hesitating what to say or whether to speak at all. Whenever he had anything on his mind he said it without waiting to see whether the galleries were full or empty. He had a way of talking straight on, slowly and deliberately, using homely phrases and few

adjectives, with a simplicity and directness that carried conviction of his sincerity no matter whether the listener agreed with him or not. He was never extravagant in statement, and after he had made a positive assertion there were few who were reckless enough to dispute it. Though having little of the art of oratory, yet in the scriptural dignity of his diction he sometimes rose to heights which could not be surpassed by those more skilled in rhetoric. He was not a frequent speaker. He never took the floor unless he had something pertinent to propose, some argument to elucidate, or some misunderstanding to set right. He seldom made a set speech. Outside an occasional eulogy, through all his service in the Senate, their number could almost be counted on one's fingers. Whatever he said was prompted by the circumstances of the moment; because he had something in his head which nobody else was likely to put exactly as he would like to see it expressed. When on the occasion of a public meeting or dinner he was obliged to prepare an address, he used to "agonize" over it, to borrow one of his own words, and even to the last he dreaded setting down in advance of delivery what he was expected to say. "Pumping water out of a dry well," he called it. As a lawyer, he would have appealed more effectively to a bench of judges than to a jury, and that, as it happens, is just the quality which gets a man a hearing in the Senate.

After his death, a writer who knew him well gave this truthful picture of his appearance in debate:

> Physically Senator Platt was no less noteworthy than mentally. In his later years he used to be likened to a Hebrew prophet. Once suggested, that thought was never forgotten as one looked at him. There was a rugged strength in the sharp-cut features, strong and individual

as though chiselled in hard gray stone, an austerity in the moulding of the mouth, in the outline of the jaw beneath the short gray beard, in the whole pose of the man—he must have stood six feet four inches tall—that stamped him a ruler. He was slender and graceful, too, in his carriage despite the slight bend that came with the years, and his head was ever erect. His attitude as he addressed the Senate was always the same. With one foot slightly advanced, and with one hand pressed on the desk beside him so that he leaned slightly from the shoulders, he would stand with his head thrown back and speak slowly and briefly without gesture, speaking distinctly but in a quiet tone, looking upward rather than at his listeners, and weighing each word as he uttered it, as if he had fused all the factors of the problem in the crucible of his mind and were but reporting in the minimum of words the conscientious result. There was no borrowed effect of impressiveness; he was naturally impressive or austere in the severe simplicity of his manner. He often or commonly qualified his statements with a slow "it seems to me" that added rather than subtracted weight.[1]

As he continued in service and became one of the veterans of the Senate, his unselfish helpfulness was more and more in evidence, so that he had the affection of his associates as well as their esteem. Sometimes he felt that work was being heaped upon him beyond his power to endure, but no matter what it was he never thought of shirking. "I am nothing but a dray-horse anyway," he said, "and I suppose that I must pull the load as long as I can stand"; and another time he wrote: "I would rather be an old work-horse drawing my daily load than an old race-horse turned out to pasture."

After he had been in the Senate a good many years, a newspaper asked him to answer the question:

[1] The Springfield *Republican*, April 22, 1905.

"What must a young man do to become a Senator of the United States?" The reply he made is suggestive of the spirit in which he carried on his work:

In reply to your question I would say: First, that a young man had better not have such an ambition, as he will only be disappointed if he achieves it; because the life of a United States Senator is one of hard work, which is never understood and never appreciated. If the young man simply desires to obtain the place for any credit or honor that may pertain to it, and if that fills his ambition without regard to what he may achieve as a Senator, that is one thing; but the Senate is much like the old-time schoolhouse—divided into classes. If a man is to get into the first class and sit on the first bench he has got to do it by intense study and work, and whatever class he may be in he only "goes up one" because of some superiority. This is an immense country; subjects of legislation embrace the widest range, and require the widest information; and to act intelligently a Senator must possess the widest information about every subject. The greater his information the more useful he becomes. Add to this that he is expected to be the agent of every one in his State who has business in Washington, legislative, political, or commercial—and you obtain a glimpse of what a Senator must do and be to obtain a successful reputation.

Second—If in spite of my advice any young man will persist in cherishing the ambition you name, his whole life should be a study of political affairs. The Senatorship may be thrust on him; it may come as the result of wealth, which follows business enterprise; but the clean and honorable road to it is through a study of public affairs, and the capacity to impress the people of his State with the idea that he possesses a thorough knowledge of them and will be their true representative.

Third—His idea of politics should be a lofty one. His motive for devotion to public life should be that he may

render service to the people rather than to accomplish personal success. Few men will ever reach the Senate as a result of a talent for political manipulation, and those who thus succeed will be senatorial nonentities rather than senatorial leaders.

As he grew older he was spared the common failing of the old, a loss of mental elasticity. Instead, his faculties seemed constantly to expand so as to embrace new themes of national interest, and at his death, in all that goes to constitute a public servant he was intellectually younger than most of his associates who could not count so many years. He seemed to have learned the secret of perpetual youth, so that when the end came at the age of nearly fourscore the blow was as unexpected as though he had been a young man of promise just entering upon a new career.

When the venerable Henry Clay Trumbull congratulated him on his last election to the Senate, he replied:

> You speak of growing old. Of course, the days are told off, one by one, and they go pretty rapidly sometimes, especially down here during a session of Congress, but so far as a man's actual age by years is concerned, that does not amount to much. I count no man old, who lives in the present, and thinks in the future.

CHAPTER VII

SAVIOUR OF THE PATENT SYSTEM

Chairman of the Patents Committee—Preserving the Patent System —Speech of March 24, 1884—Friend of the American Inventor.

ILLUSTRATIVE of the spirit which guided the Senator through years of unselfish service was his work for the inventors of the United States. From the beginning almost to the very end of his career, he gladly gave himself without reserve to what to others might have seemed a thankless task, the shaping of patent legislation and the prevention of vicious patent laws. On all questions relating to these subjects, he spoke with unchallenged authority. It did not bring him general reputation; for newspapers do not advertise such quiet success. They save their headlines for spectacular effects, the melodrama and extravaganza of the legislative stage. But what he accomplished brought him the satisfaction of work far-reaching and well done, and that was all he cared for. If he lost the passing notoriety of the day, he wrote his name in shining letters in the history of American Invention where it will be read in years to come.

Beyond most men, he realized the poetry of patents, —invention's most effective stimulant and lure. The time in which we live he liked to call the age of machinery, and through it he believed the world was about to enter, if it had not already entered, a spiritual age

when mind should triumph over matter, brain over muscle, when man should conquer nature's forces and make them all his slaves. For him the wonderful advancement in the realm of science and in the development of the mechanic arts was not the mark of a materialistic time; it was the evidence of higher things. For him an engine had the beauty of a sculptor's masterpiece; its rhythm was the music of the progress of mankind. Books without number had been written to tell us of the noble influence upon the character of man exerted by the scenes in which he dwells —"by mountain and forest, by brook and river and ocean, by clear sky and fleecy clouds, by the rare tints of sunset and dawn, by breaking billow and roaring blasts," but who should write, he asked, of that greater and subtler moulding influence exerted upon the character of man by his subjection of the forces of the earth and air to be his ministering spirits:

> Compare the man who muses on nature, who drinks in the influence of the mountain from afar, with the man who pierces that mountain to make a highway for the distribution of the world's products, or digs out from their dungeon the imprisoned metals, to be wrought into implements for his own use, and tell me which man grows most and best. Which is the most of a man, he who gazes with awe on the dark storm-cloud and sees in the lightning only the manifestation of the wrath of an angry God, or he who subdues the lightning and makes it his servant and sends it to and fro on missions of mercy and sympathy to his fellow-man?[1]

Having this vision it is not strange that he discovered

[1] Address before the Congress in celebration of the beginning of the Second Century of the American Patent System, April 9, 1891.

the most significant event between the founding of the government and the Civil War, not in the crowded pages of political history, but in the little-known Act of 1836, which under the express authority of the Constitution created the Patent Office, and gave American inventors their first substantial recognition; nor was it to be wondered that he found congenial occupation in the task set for him of preserving the integrity of that act and blocking the schemes of those who would have done it to its death. He logically became a member of the Patents Committee at the beginning of his first Congress. There was a vacancy caused by the retirement of his predecessor, Barnum, and Platt was thought to be a good man for the place because his practice at home had much to do with patent law. It was natural, too, that Connecticut should be represented on the Committee, because in proportion to her population she stands at the head of all the States in the number of patents issued to her citizens. When the Republicans secured control in 1881, he became Chairman of the Committee and served as chairman ten years in all, one period of six years ending in 1887, when he went to the head of the Committee on Territories, the other period of four years terminating in 1899, when he was entrusted with the great responsibility of the newly created Committee on Relations with Cuba. He was a member of the Committee until 1903, and to the end of his service in the Senate he was looked upon as the highest authority in Congress on patent law. To reproduce his record would be to recite the catalogue of legislation during all that time, and he had to handle some of the most important measures affecting patents and copyrights enacted during the last three quarters of a century.

About the time he became Chairman of the Committee, the farmers of the West were up in arms on account of what they regarded as the extortions of those who held the patents on barbed wire and driven wells. The question was rapidly getting into politics, and there was danger that Congress would try to appease them by passing general legislation which would work hardship to innocent inventors not involved in the dispute. Mr. Platt was disturbed by the prospect, and tried to appease the discontent by moderate legislation. One of the first bills he introduced and reported as Chairman of the Committee in 1882 was to regulate practice in patent suits. It provided that where a defendant innocently bought a patented article or device for his own personal use and the plaintiff did not recover more than twenty dollars, no costs should be recovered of the plaintiff. He tried to get a vote on the bill in the Senate, but amendments were moved and objections interposed. "There are two sides to be considered here," he pleaded:

> There are those who suffer from the acts of unprincipled men, and there are honest patentees throughout the country. The rights of both parties are to be considered, and I do not think that the people, particularly at the West, who have been imposed upon and made to pay money unreasonably and improperly, want to insist upon any bill or any amendment to this bill which will work a hardship to the honest patentee.

The bill went over; the pressure on Congress continued; but it was two years before anything else was done.

The first session of the Forty-eighth Congress in 1884 is memorable in the history of American invention. Mr. Platt was serving a second term as Chairman of

the Patents Committee and it fell to him to save the patent system from serious injury. The House of Representatives early in the session passed a bill to regulate procedure in patent suits in cases of infringement by innocent users and purchasers of patented devices. It was intended to remedy the evils complained of by the farmers but its provisions were drastic. The true nature and effect of the measure do not seem to have been clearly understood. It passed the House without debate under suspension of the rules, and when it came to the Senate, the Patents Committee instructed the Chairman to report it favorably. No sooner did the inventors of the United States begin to realize what was going on than a storm of protest arose which soon reached the halls of Congress. It was contended that the suggested change would destroy the usefulness of the Patent Office and bring American inventive genius to a pause.

Mr. Platt, against the judgment of the majority of his committee, set to work to prevent the injury which was threatened. On March 24, 1884, hardly a month from the time the bill had been reported, he introduced a bill of his own which was intended to fix the attention of the Senate upon the patent system in a way which would react against unfriendly legislation. The bill proposed to make an independent department of the Patent Office, divorcing it from the Interior Department under which it was placed, and giving it a status like that of the Department of Agriculture, which at that time was presided over by a commissioner, and not by a cabinet officer. The bill also gave to the Patent Office exclusive control of the building now known as the Interior Department, and of the fund pertaining to the office. A few days after introducing this bill,

Mr. Platt delivered a speech in support of it which was regarded at the time as the best defence ever made of the American patent system, and which, betraying extraordinary thoroughness of research, remains to-day the most comprehensive and authoritative public utterance concerning its development. He said:

> The growth of our patent system, its vast importance, its intimate connection with and direct influence upon the property of the country demand that it shall receive a degree of attention which it can not and will not receive while it remains a merely subordinate bureau of the Interior Department.

After tracing the history of the patent system to its origin in the grant of enumerated powers in the Constitution, he declared that to his mind the passage of the Act of 1836, creating the Patent Office, was the most important event in the history of the Government, prior to the War of the Rebellion. He presented pages of statistics to show that the unexampled progress of the United States had been dependent upon and coincident with the growth and development of the patent system:

> All history confirms us in the conclusion that it is the development, by the mechanic arts, of the industries of a country, which brings to it greatness and power and glory. No purely agricultural, pastoral people ever achieved any high standing among the nations of the earth. It is only when the brain evolves and the cunning hand fashions labor-saving machines that a nation begins to throb with new energy and life and expands with a new growth. It is only when thought wrings from nature her untold secret treasures that solid wealth and strength are accumulated by a people. Especially is this true in a republic. Under arbitrary forms of government kings may oppress the

laborer, kings may conquer other nations, may oppress and degrade the men who till the soil, and they may thus acquire wealth; but in a republic it is only when the citizen conquers nature, appropriates her resources, and extorts her riches that you find real wealth and power.

We witness our development; we are proud of our success; we congratulate ourselves, we felicitate ourselves on all that we enjoy; but we scarcely ever stop to think of the cause of all this prosperity and enjoyment. Indeed, this prosperity has become so common that we expect it. Many men forget to what they owe it; many men I am sorry to say in these recent years deny the cause of it all. The truth is, we live in this atmosphere of invention; it surrounds us as does the light and the air; like light and air it is one of our greatest blessings; and yet we pass it by without thought. Some say that the cause of all this wealth, of all this influence in the world, springs from other sources; some say it is the result of our free institutions, of our Christian civilization, of our habits of industry, of our respect for the law, of the vastness of our natural resources, but I say inventive skill is the primal cause of all this progress and growth. I say the policy which found expression in the Constitution of the United States when this clause was enacted, giving Congress power "to promote the progress of science and useful arts by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries," has been the policy that has built up this fair fabric.

Concede all you claim: Free institutions, Christian civilization, industrious habits, great respect for law; acknowledge all our vast natural resources; and then deduct patents and patented inventions from the causes which have led to this development, and you have subtracted from material, yes, from moral, prosperity nearly all that is worth enjoying. Subtract invention from the causes which have led to our growth and our grandeur and you remit us, you remit our people, to the condition of

the people of Italy, of Switzerland, of Russia. If "knowledge is power," invention is prosperity.

Let us turn a moment from the present and take one rapid glance at the past. Consider the country as it was fifty years ago. The cotton-gin, the steamboat, the railroad, the power-loom, the printing-press, were indeed in embryo, but their development was partial and their use was extremely limited. It was still the age of homespun; it was still the age of hand labor. Brain had not, so far as production was concerned, superseded muscle. We had then twenty-six States. When the commencement of our present patent system really began, there were twenty-six States in the Union. Twelve new ones and eight Territories added since are in my judgment a tribute to the inventive genius of this country and to the perfection of its patent system.

Three classes of men had made possible the advancement of the United States in material prosperity: First, the inventors; second, the manufacturers; third the skilled laborers. The farmer had become a skilled laborer. "He purchases a machine. He no longer toils with the rude implements of the past." Without patents, the agriculture of the day would be impossible, and a large proportion of the agricultural lands of the country would be inaccessible. Without the use of patents, the entire population capable of labor in the country could not raise the cereal productions and get the surplus to a market. He denied that inventions were opposed to the interests of labor. Whenever a labor-saving machine is invented, there is no destruction of labor, but redistribution. The man relieved from a particular kind of labor by the introduction of a mechanical device engages in some higher employment. New inventions open new fields of labor. Patents are educators. The man who lives in the atmosphere of

invention produces more than the one who does not. The man who learns to operate a complicated machine acquires education of as much real value as the man who learns to conjugate Greek verbs. "There is an education of the college; there is also an education of the factory and the field. We may not despise or neglect either." He contended that the right of the inventor was as much entitled to the protection of the Government as any other species of property; that it was excelled in point of dignity by no other property right whatever, and was equalled in point of dignity only by the rights which authors have in their copyrighted books. The property in patents was a property which contained within itself the principle of the reproduction of property, and that was a characteristic which attached to no other species of property. Every patent had in it the germ of a new patent, which in time was property:

> Nature is one vast storehouse of wealth, but it is a locked storehouse, and the human brain alone can unlock it. Invention is the magic key? Men seek gold in the bowels of the earth, but it lies in the air, in light, in the gases, in electricity. It needs no enchanter's wand, no talismanic words to set it free—only the processes of thought. . . .
>
> We stand but in the very vestibule of the great storehouses of nature's secrets. We have but gathered a few pebbles along the shore on which beats a limitless sea. . . . We live in a wonderland. The miracle of yesterday is the commonplace of to-day. The dream of the present is to be the fact of the immediate future.

He had heard it said that men would have invented without regard to the encouragement given to them by our patent laws; that, even if their property in patents

were not protected, they would have gone on inventing all the same; that there had been in some way a marvellous birth in this country of inventive capacity, and that it must grow whether protected or not.

> It is not true [he declared]; the inventor is no more a philanthropist than is the agriculturist. He works for his support. He works to achieve a competency. He invents, if you please, to become rich; but he is no more a philanthropist than any other man in any other walk or avocation of life, and you have no right to demand of him that he shall be a mere philanthropist. He is entitled to his reward. He is a laborer entitled to his hire, entitled to it more if possible than any other laborer, as his labor is higher in dignity and grandeur than that of any other laborer.

Having thus dwelt upon the marvels of invention, he presented practical considerations in support of his bill. He said the Patent Office should be made an independent department, not only because of the vast importance of the interests which it must care for, but because of the treatment which it had received and must continue to receive so long as it remained a subordinate branch of the Interior Department. The Interior Department was overburdened. No one man could discharge its duties properly:

> If the Secretary of the Interior had as many heads as the Hindoo divinity Siva, and as many arms as Briareus, he could not personally perform all the duties pertaining to his office that would be most acceptably performed if he could give them personal attention.

The duties to be performed by the Secretary in other branches of the Department would probably always lead in the future, as in the past, to the selection of a

man for the place without special adaptation to the important work of the Patent Office:

Public opinion demands that the Secretary of the Interior must have defined ideas relating to the Indian policy; that he must have a knowledge of the laws relating to the Indian policy; that he must have a knowledge of the laws relating to public lands; that he must understand the operation of the railroads in their relation to the Government; that he must have a territorial knowledge which will enable him to administer, so far as his duty requires, the affairs of the Territories. He must have been trained in a different school from the man who should be selected for Commissioner of Patents or for the head of the Patent Department. Let me illustrate.

If the Secretary of the Interior is to be the superior officer, he must pass upon questions of administration which he cannot so well understand as the commissioner. Under the practice of the office he passes on most complicated questions affecting the right to inventions. There has been no Secretary of the Interior within my knowledge who has had any special adaptation to that office, who has been selected at all with reference to his mechanical judgment or mechanical skill, or because of his superior understanding of the complicated questions of patent law.

The head of the Patent Office should combine an accurate and almost universal knowledge of mechanical principles with a thorough knowledge of patent law and with rare executive and administrative ability. His position should be one of entire independence, as his duties are more judicial than executive. The office should be permanent and not subject to political changes.

Practical arguments there were why the entire building of the Interior Department should be turned over to the Patent Office:

The space which is allotted to the clerical employees of the Patent Office may be large enough for a dungeon, it may be large enough for a tomb, and it may be a little too large for a grave, but it is not a fit amount of room for a human being to live and do the work of this Government in. . . .

I have visited the Patent Office, and I undertake to say that, if any Senator will go there and see where the clerks are performing their duties, will see where the most skilled experts of the country, with the best scientific attainments, are performing their duties, down in the rooms which, until it became absolutely necessary to have more space, were used only for coal cellars, huddled together where the sunlight rarely or never shines in the room, where there is little or no ventilation, and where the air is so foul that I venture to say no Senator can stay an hour without becoming nauseated and sick, I think he would have little doubt that something should be done not only to increase the efficiency of the office, but to prevent the almost barbarous treatment of its employees.

And yet this "pauper whom nobody owns" was the only self-sustaining branch of the Government, with a fund to its credit of $2,727,107, "not including the amount that Congress took from its fund to help pay for the building, into the basement and coal cellars of which it has been largely crowded."

The bill which Mr. Platt introduced served only as a text for his speech. It never went farther on the legislative road, but that it was not framed in vain appears from the proceedings of April 21st, when Mr. McPherson of New Jersey, presenting a formidable array of remonstrances against the House and Senate bills to regulate practice in patent suits, moved to recommit the bills to the Patents Committee:

Considering [he said] the vast amount of interests involved in this matter, and considering also that all of these interests are to a great extent imperilled and held subject to the wisdom of Congress touching all matters relating to the patent laws, and considering further the very able and exhaustive argument made by the honorable Chairman of that Committee (Mr. Platt) upon this subject a few days ago, I have felt emboldened to ask the consent of this committee to review its work, and if possible present to the Senate some more equitable, some better mode of remedying the evils complained of than is found in the bills now before the Senate.

The motions were agreed to and the threatened peril was averted.

It was Mr. Platt's lot, during his long service, to aid in framing many acts relating to patents, so that there are few existing laws which do not bear his imprint, and even in the last days of his life he was in conference with the leaders of the American bar, with reference to reform in the patent laws still to be secured. But though he had done nothing else, the service he rendered in the Forty-eighth Congress would have been enough to earn him the lasting gratitude of American inventors.

CHAPTER VIII

THE WORK FOR INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT, 1884–1891

International Copyright—A Legislative Triumph—Law of 1891—Subsequent Legislation.

MR. PLATT'S name is justly associated more closely than that of any other legislator with the work done for bringing the United States into copyright relations with Europe. Under his skilful leadership, the campaign which for over half a century had been carried on without practical results by the publishers and authors of the United States, culminated in the enactment by the Fifty-first Congress of a law which for the first time assured to foreign authors protection in the United States for the property rights in their productions, and which secured at the same time reciprocal protection in Europe for the works of American authors.

The question of international copyright was first brought before Congress in 1837, when Henry Clay presented an address from certain authors of Great Britain representing the injury caused to their literary property and to their property interests, through the want of a law securing to them within the United States the exclusive control of their productions, and requesting, in behalf of the authors of Great Britain, a remedy through legislation. The address was referred to a select committee made up of Henry Clay, William

C. Preston, James Buchanan, Daniel Webster, Thomas Ewing, and John Ruggles, which committee reported a bill for the amendment of the copyright statute by the addition of an international provision. The bill drafted by Clay on the lines of the report of the committee remains one of the classics of legislative literature. Memorials urging its passage, signed by the leading writers of the United States, among them, Washington Irving, Edward Everett, Rufus Choate, John Quincy Adams, William Cullen Bryant, and Robert C. Winthrop, and further memorials signed by a publishers' committee, the representatives of which were William H. Appleton and George P. Putnam, were laid before Congress. Petitions were also submitted in opposition to the proposed legislation. Mr. Clay never succeeded in securing action upon his bill, the provisions of which were in accord with the statute passed in 1891, and with that which went into force in 1909, in requiring American manufacture for the books securing copyright. It was presented in the Senate five times, but was voted upon only once, in 1840, when it was ordered to lie upon the table.

Between 1837 and 1842, numerous petitions favoring international copyright were presented to Congress, petitions which included in addition to the signatures of nearly all the leading authors of the country, the names of the representatives of the Publishers' Copyright League.

In 1838, after the passing of the first international copyright act in Great Britain, Lord Palmerston invited the American Government to co-operate in shaping a copyright convention between the two countries.

In 1842, George P. Putnam brought again into activity the American Copyright League, and presented

a memorial drafted by himself, and signed by ninety-seven publishers and printers, in which it was stated that the absence of an international copyright was "alike injurious to the business of publishing and to the best interests of the people at large."

In 1848, a memorial, drafted by George P. Putnam and signed by William C. Bryant, John Jay, and others, was presented to Congress, asking for a copyright measure similar in principle to that which was enacted in 1891. The memorial was ordered printed and was referred to a committee, from which no report was made.

In 1853, George P. Putnam, writing on behalf of the leading publishers of New York, including Charles Scribner, William H. Appleton, Mason Brothers, and others, addressed a letter to Mr. Everett, Secretary of State, recommending the framing of a copyright convention with Great Britain.

Charles Sumner, then Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, interested himself in the subject, and reported to the Senate a treaty drafted by Edward Everett and himself. The proposal had the approval of President Fillmore, but it was met in Congress with a storm of remonstrance.

In 1854, President Pierce secured an additional article extending the time limit for the exchange of ratifications, but the Senate allowed the treaty to expire without action.

In 1867, Mr. Samuel M. Arnell, of Tennessee, secured the passage of a resolution in the House of Representatives directing the Joint Library Committee to inquire into the subject of international copyright, and to make a report. Such a report was presented to the House in 1868 by Mr. J. G. Baldwin, of Massachusetts, accompanied by a bill which was based upon a draft submitted

from the Copyright Association of New York by W. C. Bryant, President, and George P. Putnam, Secretary. This bill secured copyright to foreign authors, with the condition that their books should be manufactured in the United States. It was referred to the Joint Committee on the Library, from which it never emerged.

In 1868, the American Copyright Association was reorganized in response to a letter headed "Justice to Authors and to Artists," which was issued by a committee comprising George P. Putnam, Dr. S. I. Prime, Henry Iverson, and James Parton. Of this Association, Mr. Bryant was made President. At the instance of this Association, a bill was prepared, which was introduced into the House in 1871 by S. S. Cox of Ohio, and in the Senate by John Sherman, also of Ohio. The bill, however, stirred up the usual flock of adverse petitions, as a result of which it was reported unfavorably by the Joint Committee on the Library, which at that time had charge of copyright business.

In 1870, the so-called Clarendon Treaty was proposed through Mr. Thornton, the British Minister at Washington. The proposed treaty gave to the authors and artists of each country the privilege of copyright in the other by registering the work within three months of the date of the original publication.

In 1872, a bill was again presented from the Publishers' Association, which provided that the American edition of the foreign work securing American copyright should be manufactured in this country, and that the American register of copyright should be made within one month of the date of the original publication. In the same year, the draft of a bill was submitted by Mr. John P. Morton, publisher of Louisville, under which

any American publisher was to be at liberty to reprint the work of a foreign author on the condition of making payment to such author of a ten per cent. royalty.

Later in the same year a similar measure was introduced by Mr. Beck and Mr. Sherman providing that the royalty should be five per cent. Both of these bills were buried in the Library Committee.

In 1873, Senator Lot M. Morrill of Maine, on behalf of the Library Committee, reported adversely to the consideration by Congress of any international copyright bill on the ground that "there was no unanimity of opinion among those interested in the measure."

In 1874, Mr. Henry B. Banning, of Ohio, introduced into the House the sixth international copyright bill, which secured copyright for foreign authors on the simple condition of reciprocity. The bill was referred to the Committee on Patents where it remained.

In 1878, a project for a copyright convention or treaty was submitted on behalf of the Publishers' Association to Mr. Evarts, then Secretary of State, and in 1880, the draft of a convention in line with this scheme from the publishers was submitted by Mr. Lowell to Lord Granville.

In 1880, a petition was submitted to Congress, signed by President Woolsey, of Yale, and by a number of authors, publishers, and printers, asking for the enactment of a bill extending to foreign authors, composers, and designers the privilege of copyright in the United States.

In 1882, Mr. Robinson, of New York, presented a bill giving consideration to the whole subject of copyright, domestic and international. It was referred to the Committee on Patents, where it was buried.

In 1883, the eighth international copyright bill was

introduced by Mr. Patrick A. Collins, of Massachusetts. This also was buried in the Committee on Patents.

In 1884, the ninth international copyright bill was introduced into the House by Mr. Dorsheimer, of New York. This provided simply for the extension to foreign authors of the privileges enjoyed by the citizens or residents of the United States. This bill was approved by the Copyright League, and was favorably reported to the House by the Committee on the Judiciary, to which it had been referred. It reached the stage of being discussed in the House, but a resolution to fix a date for its final consideration was defeated.

President Arthur, in his first annual message, reported to Congress that negotiations for an International Copyright Convention were in hopeful progress. The President, however, deemed it inadvisable to complete such negotiation until Congress should by statute fix the extent of the privileges to be secured in the United States by foreign holders of copyright. This country was accordingly not represented at the convention that was called in Berne in 1886, which resulted in bringing the states of Europe into copyright relations with each other.

In the same year a bill was introduced into the House by Mr. English dealing with international copyright in dramatic compositions. It was referred to the Judiciary Committee, which took no action.

In 1885, President Cleveland permitted the envoy of the United States to be present at the Berne Conference as a delegate, but without the power of committing the Government to any action.

In 1885, The American (Authors') Copyright League was reorganized with Mr. Lowell as President and Mr. Stedman as Vice-President. Mr. Platt had long shown a

keen interest in the purpose of the Copyright Leagues and had come into personal relations with a number of those who were working to secure justice to authors. His first official connection with the movement, however, was when on the 13th of January, 1886, he secured unanimous consent for a resolution authorizing the Committee on Patents to take testimony relating to a bill introduced by his colleague General Hawley to establish an international copyright. The bill of Senator Hawley was substantially identical with that which had been introduced a year back by Mr. Dorsheimer. It was referred to the Senate Committee on Patents. A similar bill was introduced in the House by J. Randolph Tucker of Virginia, and was referred to the Committee on Judiciary.

Both committees failed to make any report, and the cause of copyright appeared, therefore, to be no further advanced than at the time when it was first brought to the attention of the Senate in 1837 by Henry Clay, but the leaven of half a century's teaching had been working both with the public and with Congress.

In 1886, President Cleveland, in his message of December 6th, gave to the movement a more emphatic endorsement than had been given by any of his predecessors. At the request of the representatives of the Publishers' Committee, Mr. Cleveland included in his message the following paragraph:

> The drift of sentiment in civilized communities toward full recognition of the rights of property in the creations of the human intellect has brought about the adoption by many important nations of an international copyright convention, which was signed at Berne on the 18th of September, 1886. Inasmuch as the Constitution gives to Congress the power "to promote the progress of science and

useful arts by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries," this Government did not feel warranted in becoming a signatory pending the action of Congress upon measures of international copyright now before it, but the right of adhesion to the Berne Convention hereafter has been reserved. I trust the subject will receive at your hands the attention it deserves, and that the just claims of authors, so urgently pressed, will be duly heeded.

The action of the Convention of Berne in bringing into copyright relations with each other nearly all of the states of Europe unquestionably had its effect upon sentiment in the United States, and prepared the way for the work which was to be accomplished a little later by Mr. Platt and other leaders in Congress whose interest he had secured in the undertaking.

The Secretary of the American Publishers' Copyright League, from its re-organization in 1866 to the present time, has been George Haven Putnam. The Secretaries of the Authors' League have been successively George P. Lathrop, George W. Green, and Robert Underwood Johnson, who was elected in 1888. The two associations carried on a systematic campaign of "education," as a result of which the press throughout the country declared itself overwhelmingly in favor of the reform, and petitions urging copyright law rained in upon Congress from educators and leading citizens generally.

In 1888, a Joint Campaign Committee was formed, representing the authors, publishers, printers, the Typographical Union and other interests, which had arrived at an agreement upon a bill believed to be practicable. During the year ending March, 1891, Mr. Johnson acted as a secretary of this joint committee; and its Chairman was Dr. Edward Eggleston, whose

service and personal influence in Washington proved very valuable. The publishers were represented on the Committee by Charles Scribner and W. W. Appleton. The labor of framing the successive bills fell chiefly to the members and to the counsel of the Publishers' Committee.

In 1888, Senator Chace, of Rhode Island, reported favorably from the Patents Committee a bill that had been introduced by himself, and a similar bill was reported from the Judiciary Committee of the House by Patrick A. Collins, of Massachusetts. The Chace bill, with some amendment, passed the Senate on the 9th of May, 1888, by a vote of 35 to 10. It was reported favorably by the Judiciary Committee of the House, but no further action could be secured.

The first draft of the bill, which was submitted to Senator Chace by the Joint Committee of the Authors and Publishers, provided that foreign books securing American copyright must be printed in the United States, but permitted the importation of *clichés* of the type, or of duplicates of the plates which had been prepared for printing the original editions. It was contended that for certain classes of books the necessity of doing the typesetting twice instead of dividing this cost between an English and an American edition, would involve a wasteful expense, the burden of which would have to be shared between the readers, the authors, and the publishers. On the other hand, the Typographical Unions insisted that a provision for American typesetting was essential for their trade interests, and that unless such a provision should be inserted, they would be under the necessity of opposing the bill.

It was the opinion of Senator Chace, and of other of the Congressional friends of copyright, that the

co-operation of the Unions would be very important, while their influence against the bill in committee and through their friends in the House would probably be sufficiently powerful to prevent its passage, at least in the near future. It was, therefore, decided by the authors and publishers of the two leagues to accept on this point the contentions of the typographers and to utilize their co-operation. The International Typographical Union selected as its representative on the Joint Campaign Committee Mr. John L. Kennedy, of the Washington Union, whose service proved valuable in more ways than one.

The advocates of honest dealing in literary affairs, at the beginning of the new Republican administration of 1889, found their cause still far from success, but with the sentiment of the public appreciably aroused, and with an increasingly intelligent interest on the part of leaders in the two Houses.

President Harrison in his first message laconically expressed the opinion that the enactment of an international copyright law would be "eminently wise and just." Missionary work with Congress began at once, and the Copyright Leagues set about creating a sentiment at the capital commensurate with the feeling that had already been created outside.

In the Senate, Mr. Platt and Mr. Hoar, in the House Mr. Lodge, Mr. Simonds of Connecticut, Mr. McKinley of Ohio, Mr. Adams of Illinois, Mr. Breckenridge of Kentucky, Mr. Wilson of West Virginia, and Mr. Butterworth of Ohio, were strong advocates, while Speaker Reed lent his all-powerful aid. The most active opponents of the bill in the Senate were Beck of Kentucky, Daniel of Virginia, George of Mississippi, and Regan of Texas. Before the close of the year,

Mr. Chace resigned from the Senate, and on his urgent advice it was decided that Mr. Platt, who was then the second member of the Patents Committee, and oldest in point of committee service, should take charge of the Copyright bill. The selection was most fortunate. The task of the management of such a bill was difficult and delicate, calling for a full measure of patience, persistency, sagacity, and tact, familiarity with parliamentary procedure, sympathetic acquaintance with the personalities and foibles of his associates, and the capacity to deal both with the leaders of the Senate and the managers of the House.

The successful guidance of the bill to ultimate enactment on the very last night of the Congress was dependent on innumerable incidents, any one of which, bunglingly handled, would have contained potential disaster, and every one of which, under skilful pilotage, contributed to the final triumph. Mr. Platt on the very first working day of the session introduced a bill providing for international copyright. A little later he reported favorably from the Patents Committee another bill, differing only in the correction of informalities, and at the earliest opportunity he asked the Senate to consider this bill as in committee of the whole. But strategically he did not think it wise to press his measure in the Senate until it could be ascertained more clearly as to the sentiment of the House. So long as he could be instrumental in securing legislation, he was indifferent whether the measure bore his name. In the House, the Judiciary Committee and the Patents Committee each had reported bills. The Judiciary Committee's bill reported by Mr. Adams first got the ear of the House through a special order. It was badly amended and then beaten by a vote of 99 to 125. This

defeat served only as a guide to the friends of international copyright for future effort. A few days later Mr. Simonds introduced another bill on the lines of the bill originally introduced by Mr. Chace two years earlier, in accordance with the programme of American writers, typographers, and publishers. This new measure, in effect, was promptly reported from the Patents Committee of which Mr. Simonds was a member. It was not considered, however, during the strenuous days of the first session of the Fifty-first Congress, and its friends devoted the time until the next session should meet in still further arousing public sentiment and personally canvassing the members of the House. President Harrison in his annual message of December 1, 1890, renewed his recommendation "in favor of legislation affording just copyright protection to foreign authors on a footing of reciprocal advantages for our authors abroad," and on the very next day, the second day of the session, on call of committees, Mr. Simonds, on behalf of the Patents Committee, called up his bill. In the face of every known device for parliamentary obstruction the bill was passed on December 3, 1890, by a vote of 139 to 95. As the Senate of the Fiftieth Congress, nearly identical in membership with the Senate of the Fifty-first Congress, had passed substantially the same measure two years before by a majority of over three to one (35 to 10) the vote in the House was hailed as a virtual achievement of the reform. It proved, however, to be only the prelude of one of the hardest contests in the Senate's history.

It was at this point that Mr. Platt assumed active management of the campaign. The Senate was engaged in one of its historic struggles, precipitated by the Democratic victory in November, and the deter-

mination of the Republican leaders, if possible, to secure the enactment of the Federal Elections law before a Democratic House should come into control. There were other important measures pressing for consideration which were earnestly desired by Senators on whom the friends of international copyright depended for support, and the time at the disposal of Congress before the 4th of March was distressingly meagre. To secure even an opportunity to discuss a measure was no easy task, yet in face of the eagerness to get at the Pure Food bill, the Nicaraguan Canal bill, and the Revenue Cutter bill, Mr. Platt was called upon not only to secure discussion, but to insure enactment of a bill which was not popularly compelling, which was the object of bitter and mercenary opposition, which was objected to by certain publishers because it deprived them of discreditable gain, and by a great mass of people who had been cunningly convinced that international copyright would mean an increase in the price of books and would be a blow at the education of the poor. In the face of such opposition it was manifest that in order to receive any consideration the bill must submit to some amendment. The delicate task with the Senator who had it in charge was to distinguish where it would be safe to yield without destroying altogether, and where to remain steadfast without subjecting the measure to the certainty of defeat. A necessary first step was to insure consideration for the bill. Mr. Johnson, secretary of the joint committee of the various organizations favoring the measure, having reported for duty, Mr. Platt counselled him to call upon the members of the Steering Committee, on which were Senators Hoar and Evarts, and secure for the bill as high a position as possible in the regular order of

business. This was done, and the copyright bill was placed second, a labor bill having already been promised first place. This first move of Senator Platt was of the most vital importance.

On the 9th of February, 1891, less than a month before Congress must adjourn, Mr. Platt, watching his opportunity, moved to consider the House bill as in committee of the whole. Following his usual practice, he trespassed upon the patience of the Senate only to make the briefest necessary explanation of the purpose of the legislation. The bill, he reminded them, was practically the same as the Chace bill which had passed the Senate two years earlier, differing in principle only in that its application was to depend upon the adoption of similar legislation by foreign countries:

I will simply say that the bill proceeds upon one broad fundamental principle, and that is, that what a man fashions by his brain, his genius, his imagination, or his ingenuity, is property just as much as what he fashions by his hands or acquires by manual or other labor, and that being property, it should be property the world over and should be recognized as such. If an American writes a book, the right to publish that book should be recognized as property not only in this country, as it is now under the Constitution, but as property everywhere. If a citizen of another country writes a book, the right to publish that book should be as much property in this country as in his own country.

That is the broad principle upon which this bill rests—the protection of property, for which governments are instituted. The principle has been applied in the case of patents, and not a little of the growth and prosperity of the country is due to the fact of the recognition by this Government that a foreigner who invents a new machine or discovers a new process shall be entitled to secure a patent for the same in this country.

The Constitution puts authors first in saying that Congress may secure to them exclusive rights; it puts them before inventors; but the legislation of the country has extended the provisions of the Constitution in the matter of inventions very much further than it has in the matter of authorship and those who come in under the generic term of authors.

I believe, myself, no measure before this Congress is so calculated to enhance not only the intellectual but the material growth of this country as this Copyright bill, and I trust it will pass, and pass without amendment. As I said, we have waited fifty-three years for this opportunity, and this opportunity may be wholly lost by amendments in the Senate.

I do not know that I would say that this is a perfect bill, but it is a bill which has had long consideration by committees of the Senate and of the House of Representatives. It comes to us from the House, and now is our opportunity to obtain the passage of such a law. If there is anything in it which needs further examination, which would call for further legislation, the way for the people who desire international copyright to obtain it is to pass the bill while we have the opportunity to pass it, and establish the principle. Then if it needs further application, we can trust to the future that justice will be done.

In spite of his appeal for the passage of the bill in the form in which it came from the House, Mr. Platt was obliged to yield to several amendments, which, in the opinion of friends of the bill, detracted from its efficacy, but which were essential to securing its passage through the Senate. For more than a week, with measures of urgent importance pressing upon the Senate, and with the end of Congress in sight, Mr. Platt held the Senate to the consideration of the Copyright bill, arguing, placating, urging, pleading. He

spoke as seldom as possible, but a few things he felt that he must say. For one, he could not tolerate the lax notions prevailing about the rights of property:

People see the acquisition of property in large amounts and then jump to the conclusion that some man whom they call a millionaire has not acquired his property by direct and honest methods, and the result is that they have no respect for that man's property any more than they have for the gambler's. But they do not draw the line between property honestly acquired and property which has been acquired dishonestly. They do not draw the line between property for which a good fair equivalent has been given and property for which an honest and fair equivalent has not been given. So there has arisen in this country a tendency which, if not checked, will bring us to ruin sooner than is generally supposed—a sentiment not to regard the rights of property honestly acquired.

Of all the property which is the subject of acquisition, literary and intellectual and artistic property is the most honestly acquired. A man who has devoted his life to letters, a man who has devoted his life to art, who has been its slave and its devotee, is as honestly possessed of the property which he produces in that way as any man in the United States is honestly possessed of any property.

I wish to touch right here on the idea that a copyright is a monopoly. It is not a monopoly in the strict sense or in the legal sense, or in the right sense of that word. It is rather a property right. The right of a man to publish his book and to control the publication of his book, to publish his engraving and to control the publication of his engraving, to reproduce and control the reproduction of his painting, is a right, and a right of property, just as, when my friend from Michigan breeds a fine horse, that horse is his property, and no other man can use it; he has a right to control the use of it.

It is not in the sense in which the term is used a monopoly.

It is the right to use one's property. A man buys a house. He alone has the right to use it. He has a right to say who shall use it; he has a right to rent it to a tenant, and no other man shall set his foot in it; no other man can come to it; it is his castle; he may kill the man who ruthlessly tries to enter it. And yet no one calls him a monopolist. This copyright is simply protecting men in their property rights.

With the argument for cheap books he was equally out of patience. He declared that no man had a right to set up a cry for cheap books, if insisting that they must be cheaper, whether stolen or not:

No man has a right to put up the cry for cheap books if that cheapness depends upon appropriation without consent of the owner, any more than he has for cheap horses if to insure that cheapness the rights of the owner are in any way to be interfered with or limited or restricted. You can have everything cheap if you appropriate it without the consent of the owner; there is no trouble about that. There is no species of property in the world which you cannot cheapen by appropriation. Sometimes I think that the moral sense of the community is entirely dulled on this subject.

Finally he made his appeal for international copyright on broad and general grounds because he believed it was just and beneficial.

I believe this Congress cannot be engaged in any work nobler, or grander, or more beneficial, or more calculated to develop this nation than to protect its literature and its art, and to so act and to so legislate that its literature and its art shall be protected wherever the sun shines, in other countries as well as in this country. I believe by that means you will build up a literature, a standard of thought, a standard of intellectual effort, that you will build up a

standard of art in this country, which will elevate our whole people.

What is this country for? Is it for the mere matter of getting things cheap for the people? Is that all there is for government in these days to think of? Has it come to this, that all the wheels of government must be turned to get things cheap for the people at the expense of the property and the rights of others if need be? Is not the Government to build up, is it not to develop, is it not to make a higher and nobler race of our people, and how can we reach that any better than by protecting, by stimulating, by encouraging intellectual effort and artistic effort?

I want to tell Senators that the brain of our people is the true and I might say the only source of our national wealth. It is what our people think. When they think on a higher plane they are the richer. The higher the plane of intellectual development, and the higher the plane of artistic development the richer are our people with a wealth that is not evanescent, but a wealth that endures, and a wealth that endures not only in this world, but is the only wealth that a man can take out of it.

Senator Platt's most serious embarrassment came from amendments offered by Frye and Sherman. The bill as it passed the House provided that the two copies of books required to be deposited in the Library of Congress for purposes of international copyright should be "printed from type set within the United States or from plates made therefrom." Frye moved to include in this requirement, maps, charts, dramatical and musical compositions, engravings, cuts, prints, photographs, chromos, and lithographs. Sherman moved to amend the clause prohibiting the importation of books printed abroad, enjoying the privilege of amended copyright, by striking out the word "prohibited" and inserting in lieu thereof "subject to the duties

provided by law." The Frye amendment was adopted by a vote of 27 to 24, the Sherman amendment by a vote of 25 to 24. Either one of these amendments, had they not been attended to in Conference, would have seriously affected the chances of passing the bill, and if the Sherman amendment had become a law, it would have practically nullified the purpose of the legislation. Frye's amendment was subsequently modified so as to apply only to lithographs and photographs, and the Sherman amendment went out altogether.

At last, on February 18th, he secured a vote on the bill, and it was passed by a majority of 36 to 14, badly amended it is true, but in such form as to give some hope of an adjustment. A conference with the House was asked, and Mr. Platt, Mr. Hiscock, and Mr. Gray were appointed conferees for the Senate. Only fourteen days remained before the statutory adjournment of Congress, and ten days elapsed before the House took the question up and acceded to the Senate's request. It is an interesting coincidence that the leading member of the Conference Committee on the part of the House, Mr. Simonds, should have been a Connecticut man, so that it fell to the lot of two representatives of a single State to play the most important part in the culmination of fifty years' endeavor. It is to be remembered, too, that General Hawley of Connecticut was the first to introduce a pure and simple copyright bill in 1885. Even after the bill had gone to Conference the fight against it was continued, and it was then that some of the most skilful manœuvres were resorted to. On March 2d, the House adopted the report of the Conference Committee, which eliminated some of the objectionable Senate amendments, but the Senate refused to recede. There was a further struggle for twenty-

four hours, one proposition for compromise after another being made, and finally after midnight on the 3d of March, the Senate accepted the Conference report and about 2 A.M. passed the bill. Having been signed by the Vice-President, the bill was taken by Mr. Lodge to the House for consideration. After its passage in the House (at about 3 A.M.) and the signature by the Speaker, the bill was hurriedly engrossed (under the immediate supervision of Mr. Lodge, who stood over the clerks until they had finished their work) in order that it might be sent to the President at the White House. According to the usual routine, this would have been the end of the matter, but the opponents of international copyright were not yet prepared to give up the fight. Before the Senate had received information of the passage of the bill by the House, Senator Pasco moved to reconsider, and when the Senate adjourned at 4 A.M. that motion was pending. The Senate re-assembled some hours later, and about 11 A. M., March 4th, voted down Senator Pasco's motion, and the President, being then at the Capitol, signed the bill.

In the history of legislation, there have been few measures which clutched success so narrowly from the hands of opportunity.

At the moment Mr. Platt received the full measure of appreciation for the work he had so faithfully performed; he was a guest of honor at a banquet given in New York on April 13th, to celebrate the abolition of literary piracy,[1] and his services were recognized in other ways.

[1] At this dinner, which was presided over by E. C. Stedman, and at which were present George William Curtis, Henry Cabot Lodge, and Count Emile de Kératry, Robert Underwood Johnson in the course of a response to a toast said:

"I could name a dozen men at this board and a dozen elsewhere, but for the aid of any one of whom at some critical time we should

The leaders of the movement were generous in their acknowledgment. The decoration of the French Legion of Honor which was conferred upon Messrs. Adams and Simonds, who retired from the House of Representatives on the day the bill was passed, was offered to him but could not be accepted because he was still in office; but the Cercle de la Librairie and the Syndicat de la Propriété Littéraire et Artistique of Paris sent to him by special messenger a gold medal struck in recognition of his services to the cause of literature. The medal was brought to this country by Count E. de Kératry in June, 1891, who delivered also a letter, of which the following is a translation:

PARIS, June 16, 1891.

Senator PLATT of Connecticut.
Washington.

Senator:

You have decided by your influence the vote of the American Senate upon copyright in international relations. You have affirmed "that a product of a man's brain is his property"; you have caused it to be recognized "that there can no longer be any difference between an American and a

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not have had the happy fortune that brings us here to-night. There was at least one time, however, when the identification of one man with the success or failure of this movement was complete, when in fact its fortune appeared to rest wholly and for many days upon the tact and devotion of one Senator. I can think of no parallel to the situation save the anecdote of Col. Jones's body servant in St. Mary's Parish in Louisiana. A visitor conveyed through the bayous of the Teche inquired of his darkey boatman, Wesley, whether his former master was connected with the White League.

"'Cunnel Jones connect wid de White League?' queried Wesley in unaffected astonishment. 'Yes, a member of the League.' 'Cunnel Jones a member ob de White League? Cunnel Jones? Why, bress de Lord, Massa, Cunnel Jones *am* de White League.' In those last despairing days in the Senate, Senator Platt was not merely in charge of the Copyright bill, he *was* the copyright cause."

foreign author and that the latter henceforth ought to be placed, with you, on the same footing with the native author." You have said with regard to France that the hour has long since come to grant reciprocity for her decree of 1852, which declared all piracy of a foreign work, a crime.

It is our duty to express our keen gratitude for the great part you have taken "in this triumph of a just cause."

Our Cercle de la Librairie and Syndicat des Associations Protectrices des Œuvres de l'Esprit et de l'Art have had made in your name a medal to bear witness to this legitimate sentiment, and we are happy to have been commissioned to transmit it to you.

Will the Senator accept the expression of our high regard.

(The President of the Cercle de la Librairie
and the Syndicat de la Propriété
Littéraire et Artistique.)
(*Signed*) A. Templier.

(The Secretary General of the Syndicat.)
(*Signed*) Germond de Lavigne.

To Robert Underwood Johnson, Secretary of the American (Authors') Copyright League, who had written him an expression of thanks, he replied a few days after the adjournment of Congress:

The fact that I am still fighting over again night by night, in my sleep, the copyright struggle, will show you how deeply it took hold of me, and how nearly it came to upsetting me. I have a feeling that I was not very courteous to its friends while the contest was in progress, so morose and irritable, all of which I know they will forgive me for. I am very glad that it resulted in success. As I have written some of the publishers, the fate of copyright is now in their hands. The sentiment that it was a bill for the benefit of the publishers and against the interests of the people took a much deeper root than we at the time realized, although we felt its strength in a measure. But in talking

with people since the close of Congress I am surprised to see how thoroughly and completely that idea has permeated the country. There is no way of meeting it except by publishing editions of books copyrighted by foreign authors at a low figure. The publishers ought to see this, and ought to make a point of it. A twenty-five cent edition of a popular foreign author's copyrighted book, fairly executed, scattered as far as the market can be reached, with attention called to it in the public press as being one of the first results of the copyright law, will do more for copyright than anything else. I don't believe that you, living in a publisher's atmosphere, can realize fully the force of this, but you can to some extent.

To Dana Estes, the Boston publisher, he wrote:

I confess that there were times when the passage of the Copyright bill seemed hopeless, and I do think that persistent and patient work had something to do with the final result, over which I think I was as much gratified as any of the persons interested in the passage of the bill. Indeed, it is either my misfortune or good fortune always to feel more keenly than those directly concerned, an interest in whatever I undertake. It is wearing work under such circumstances, and sometimes I got irritable and cross, and as I look back over this contest, I feel as if I had not always been patient and courteous to those who were here looking after it, so perhaps you have a better opinion of me for having stayed away.

I think copyright has come to stay, unless publishers put up the price of books or make some combination which will be stigmatized as a trust. I don't believe they intend to do this or that it would be for their advantage to do it, and I trust you may steer clear of it. The publisher who first gets control of the work of a popular English author and publishes a cheap edition of it, and forces a wide circulation, will do more for the copyright law than we have been able to do in passing it. The objection which made

votes against it was the cry of monopoly and dearer books. The publishers can silence that cry, and it is very important that they should do so if possible, before the next session of Congress. I need not say to you that the spirit of socialism is rampant in the country, and the regard for property rights of all kinds is being weakened by demagogues and by great masses of people who want to get something that does n't belong to them, and the right of property in the book or other creation of man's intellect or genius is harder to understand and appreciate, and therefore less likely to be respected than the property right to real estate or to other kinds of personal property. It is right along this line that the danger lies. It will not do to aggravate this sentiment in respect to copyright. I want to see some publisher try the experiment of publishing the copyright work of a foreign author for the million.

Great as were his services to the cause of international copyright in 1891, they did not by any means mark the extent of his achievements. Throughout his life he remained the steadfast friend of those who were interested in improving the copyright laws, and they invariably turned to him in the hour of need. The law of March 4, 1891 was far from adequate, but it was the establishment of the principle for which the authors of the English-speaking world had been striving. It proved possible by means of the reciprocity provisions in the statute to bring the United States into copyright relations with all important European countries.

In 1897, when the playwrights of America planned to secure the enactment of an improved law for the protection of dramatic copyrights they turned instinctively to Mr. Platt, and in the Fifty-fourth Congress, largely through his efforts, a bill was enacted which elicited from Bronson Howard, the President of the

American Dramatists Club, the following appreciative letter:

201 West 78th Street, New York,
January 11, 1897.

Honorable O. H. Platt,
United States Senate.

Dear Sir:

I beg to thank you most earnestly on behalf of the American Dramatists Club for the great interest you have taken, with other members of the committee of which you are chairman, in the passage of the new law, giving protection to dramatic writers and to managers in America. The importance of the new act reaches beyond even the justice it extends to your fellow American citizens. It will raise the standard of the American theatre in every respect, and so work a great public good. Especially it will tend strongly and with certainty to the development of a national dramatic literature worthy of the country; something impossible to establish under the old law.

In due season, the defects which were inevitable in the law of 1891 began to assert themselves. Complaints arose from authors of Germany, France, Italy, and other European states, against provisions of the law, which, in effect, discriminated against all writers whose works originated in any other language than English. In the Fifty-eighth Congress, although no longer a member of the Patents Committee, at the request of George Haven Putnam, Secretary of the American Publishers' Copyright League, he introduced a bill, which had been drafted under the instructions of the Executive Committee of the League, to remedy this injustice, which threatened to lead to the abrogation of the international copyright arrangements between Germany and France and the United States. The

purpose of the bill was to relieve the foreign author in the difficulty he experienced in complying with the typesetting clause, by reason of the fact that his book was in a foreign language. The act gave him complete copyright for one year, including the absolute right of translation, but in order to continue the term of protection beyond the year, he was obliged to typeset his work in the original language in the United States, or to typeset a translation of it, in which case he was protected both in the translation and in the original work. If he complied with the typesetting clause as to the original work he secured the absolute right of translation for the entire term of the copyright.

It was no light task to secure the enactment of any kind of copyright legislation, and on a smaller scale this measure underwent some of the vicissitudes which beset the original bill in the Fifty-first Congress, but finally during the last week of the Congress, it became a law, thus proving to be almost the last public act of Mr. Platt's life. On March 3, 1905, he received from George Haven Putnam, Secretary of the American Publishers' Copyright League, this letter:

Dear Mr. Senator:

I desire to extend, on behalf of the Publishers' Copyright League and of others on both sides of the Atlantic, authors and publishers, who are interested in the protection of literary property, our cordial and appreciative thanks for the patient, capable, and all effective service that has been rendered by the Senior Senator from Connecticut during the past three years in connection with the measure that has now secured enactment in Congress. I have this morning a report from the President that the bill shall receive his signature. Your friendly co-operation in this particular undertaking is in line with a long series of similar services

that you have been able to render to the cause of literary property and of national ethics.

Mr. Putnam was able later to report to Mr. Platt that if the serious injustice of which the Continental authors and their representatives had complained had not been remedied by the amendment in question, the copyright convention between Germany and the United States would probably have been terminated. The first steps towards such cancellation of the convention had, in fact, at the instance of the German Copyright League, already been taken in the Reichstag.

That the world of letters gratefully remembered the service he had done the cause of literature was shown only a few weeks later, when the word passed over the wires that the end had come. Among the messages received at the house of mourning in Judea, was this:

The American Copyright League respectfully offers you its sympathy. Your honored husband was the father of international copyright, and deserves to be gratefully remembered by all lovers of justice and of letters. This organization will be represented on Tuesday.

Edmund Clarence Stedman,
President,
Robert Underwood Johnson,
Secretary.

Resolutions were also adopted by the American Publishers' Copyright League, as follows:

The Executive Committee of the American Publishers' Copyright League feels that in the death of the Honorable Orville H. Platt, of Connecticut, the friends of copyright have lost one of their most efficient and steadfast supporters, and one upon whose judgment and experience they could always rely.

The passage of the International Copyright act of 1891 was chiefly due to Senator Platt, and his interest in the cause of copyright continued until his death.

The Executive Committee records upon its minutes the gratitude of the American Publishers' Copyright League to Senator Platt, and its appreciation of his great ability as a statesman, his high sense of public duty, and will never forget the kindness and consideration he has always shown to all members of the League. The President is directed to send a copy of this resolution to the family of Senator Platt, and to offer them the sincere sympathy of the League.

W. W. Appleton, *President.*
Geo. Haven Putnam, *Secretary.*

A few days after Mr. Platt's death, the following appreciative letter from the pen of Robert Underwood Johnson, Secretary of the American (Authors') Copyright League, appeared in the New York *Evening Post:*

Senator O. H. Platt and International Copyright

To the Editor of the "Evening Post":

Sir: In the press notices of the death of Senator Orville H. Platt I find in the enumeration of his public services little or, in some cases, no mention of his activity in the campaign for the International Copyright bill of 1891.

No one who knows the facts will dispute the statement that the passage of the bill was due first of all to Senator Platt. His high character, his mastery of the subject, his good humor, his tact, and his parliamentary experience brought the bill through the numerous vicissitudes which beset it in the last eight weeks of the session. It was inspiriting to note his undemonstrative but unwearying devotion—rallying the friends of the bill again and again, gently mollifying the opposition of many enemies, exhorting to patience supporters whose favored measure was being

blocked by the bill, and who as the session drew to a close were threatening to side-track it if it did not get out of their way. Our era of literary piracy was memorable for the many statesmen who were enlisted in the defence of literary property, but the one man more than any other who accomplished the reform was Orville H. Platt.

In view of the fact that in the press reports of the obsequies of Senator Platt no mention has been made of the participation of authors or publishers, I may be pardoned for saying that since his death the two copyright leagues have done what they could to honor his memory by recognizing his extraordinary services to the cause of justice to literary property. Both the American Publishers' Copyright League and the American (Authors') Copyright League sent to Mrs. Platt telegrams of sympathy and of grateful acknowledgment, and both were officially represented at the funeral—the former by its President, Mr. William W. Appleton, and, in the absence in Europe of its Secretary, Mr. Putnam, by Mr. Frank H. Dodd of the Executive Committee; the latter by its Secretary. It was a matter of great regret to Mr. Stedman, the President, that it was impossible for him to attend. The Executive Council of the Authors' League also sent a wreath.

I beg the space for these facts lest it might be thought that those who know Senator Platt's pre-eminent service were singularly indifferent to his death.

It is said that republics are ungrateful. This ought, least of all, to be true of the republic of letters.

R. U. Johnson,
Secretary American Copyright League.

New York, April 26th.

On the personal side of Mr. Platt's work in behalf of American publishers and authors during this period, Mr. George Haven Putnam writes:

It was my good fortune, in connection with my work on behalf of literary property, to come into personal relations

in Washington and in New York with Senator Platt, relations which covered a long series of years. I found myself holding the Senator in increasing regard not only for clear-headed and wise-minded statesmanship, but for his absolute integrity of purpose, freedom from self-seeking, and general sweetness of nature. It was this combination of sweetness and force in his character, combined, of course, during the later years of his work in Washington, with his wide experience in affairs and knowledge of men, that secured for him so exceptional an influence over the opinions and the actions of his associates. He was held in affectionate regard not only by those with whom he was in accord on the political issues of the day, but by practically all of his political opponents, that is to say, by all with whom he came into any personal relations. The responsibility came upon him during the years between 1884 and 1891 of presenting before successive committees of the House and of the Senate the arguments in behalf of international copyright, arguments which were, as it was claimed, simply a contention on behalf not only of national ethics but of the highest intellectual interests of the community. In addition to the formal arguments presented in the committee rooms, there was, of course, much to be done in the matter of personal words with senators and representatives, to many of whom the subject was entirely unfamiliar. It was in this matter of personal relation and in the task of withstanding prejudices that were mainly based upon ignorance of the subject, that Senator Platt's influence and service were of inestimable value.

I recall one occasion, in 1904, when the Committee on Patents, of which the Senator had for years been Chairman, had, in giving their approval to a provision for a fuller measure of protection for works originating on the Continent, through a clerical error, connected with this amendment certain provisions taken from the statute book of 1891. The result of this action would have been a recommendation on the part of the Committee on Patents for rescinding the

international copyright that had been secured in 1891. I was permitted to accompany Senator Platt to a meeting of the Committee, of which at that time Senator McComas, of Maryland, was Chairman. To Senator McComas the subject of copyright was comparatively new, and he had not had direct touch with the previous proceedings. Senator Platt began to explain to the Committee the error that had been made in its previous action. He was interrupted by the Chairman and by one or two members: "There is no necessity for any detailed explanation, Senator; if you say the action was wrong, it will, of course, be rescinded. Tell us what you want, and you shall have our approval." Each man in the room knew not only that Senator Platt understood the subject of copyright, but that any word that he had to give on this or on any other matter could be absolutely trusted. The people are fortunate when their legislative business can be in the hands of men like Orville H. Platt who are not only capable leaders but also great citizens. The standard set by him for the conduct of the nation's business will prove of inestimable service for legislators, and for the nation back of the legislators, for the years to come.

CHAPTER IX

PROTECTOR OF THE INDIAN

The Red Man's Most Practical and Useful Friend—Fourteen Years with the Committee on Indian Affairs—Prevents Mischievous Legislation.

IT was almost a matter of chance that so much of the Connecticut Senator's activity in public life should have been turned to a question which up to the time of his arrival in Washington had hardly engaged his thoughts and which would seem to have as little interest for his immediate constituency as any in the numerous group of governmental problems. After he had been eight years a Senator, he found himself a member of the Committee on Indian Affairs, an assignment which few sought, and for which he had no special inclination. The Chairman of the Committee was Henry L. Dawes of Massachusetts, a serious-minded and industrious man, who, after distinguished service in the House as Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, had found his peculiar sphere of usefulness in the Senate to be the conscientious guardianship of the interests of the nation's wards. It was probably at his request that Mr. Platt, who by that time was known as a painstaking and unbeguilable Senator, became a member. It is a curious circumstance that for many years the fortunes of the Indian should have been so largely in the keeping of two Senators who were almost neighbors in the Berkshire and Litchfield hills, and it was

a lucky chance that two high-minded men of such capacity should have been ready to devote their time and talents to a thankless task.

Except to a limited number of Senators, most of them from far western States, matters concerning the Indians were of only casual interest, unless, through neglect and indifference, something in the nature of a scandal developed, as was not infrequently the case; yet the questions growing out of the relations of the United States with its Indian wards, especially the five civilized tribes in the Indian Territory, were for many years among the most complicated and difficult problems with which Congress had to deal. The treaties and agreements with the Indian tribes, some of them dating back nearly a century, were continually calling for the best legal ability in their interpretation and application to constantly arising questions of administration. The never-ending conflict between the friends of the Indian and the white settlers and avaricious corporations encroaching on the reservation forced tangled problems upon the legislative branch of the Government. The opulent soil of the territory occupied by the Indians has always been a lure to the white man, inciting him to violence, bribery, and theft; while the extraordinary spectacle of nations within a nation, presented by the republics of the Indian Territory for many years, afforded limitless opportunity not only to evil-minded persons, but also to the conscientious legislator. It was Mr. Platt's difficult task for nearly twenty years to stand between the despoilers of the Indian on the one hand, and his super-serviceable friends on the other, —to thwart the schemes of grafters and thieves, while tempering the zeal of importunate reformers. It was a burden from which he often sought relief, but never

successfully until a few months before he died, when he was able to plead his assignment to the Chairmanship of the Judiciary Committee as an excuse from further service. So he plodded along, examining with religious scrutiny every piece of proposed legislation and the wearisome details of every appropriation bill. He was scrupulously accurate in his knowledge of the ramifications of the Indian question, knew every provision of every treaty and agreement, and all the circumstances relating to every reservation.

After Mr. Dawes's retirement from the Senate in 1893, Platt was, by common consent, regarded as the one man on the Committee to whom other Senators must look for guidance in Indian legislation, and the one upon whom other leaders depended to see that no improper measures were enacted.

James K. Jones of Arkansas became Chairman under the Democratic régime of the Fifty-third Congress in 1893, but when the Republicans returned to control, there was an insistent demand that the Chairmanship of the Committee should go to Mr. Platt. He received letters from bishops, college presidents, and friends of the Indian everywhere, urging him to take the Chairmanship, to which he was in line of succession. Mr. Dawes, then Chairman of the Dawes Commission, wrote him:

> When I was at Mohonk there was a great deal of talk about your taking the Chairmanship of Indian Affairs, and the cry was universal that you *must* take it. I told them the reasons of your reluctance, which I thought I knew pretty well. But the friends of the Indian the country over know the situation, and will sorely grieve if you disappoint them. Now I do not know that you owe them anything, but I want earnestly to commend to your

consideration the question whether you are not called upon to make the sacrifice, both for the good name of the Republican party, and for the good of the Indian. You know what I mean. There is no need of further word between you and me, or to induce you to do what you think is right.

He was not moved by these appeals, and chose instead the Chairmanship of the Committee on Patents, which was much more to his liking, and which would not be so great a drain upon his energies at a time when he was to be occupied in the work of the Committees on Judiciary and Finance.

Into the details of his work on the Indian Affairs Committee, it is hardly profitable to go. Important though it was, it cuts little figure in the significant history of the time, and is of interest now chiefly as an illustration of the conscientious treatment of a strangely difficult and evanescent problem. He took an important part in all legislation affecting the Indians for nearly twenty years. His judgment prevailed with his associates in innumerable complicated questions which the great majority of Senators had neither time nor inclination to study. He had a part in the legislation relating to the opening of the "Cherokee Outlet" in 1893, and the withdrawal of government aid to sectarian schools. He urged, so far as practicable, the allotment of lands among the Indians, but he believed that the Indian ought to work his land and not rent it or sell it, as many were inclined to do, with the idea of living in idleness upon the proceeds. The manner in which his work impressed his associates is shown in the words spoken after his death by Mr. Nelson of Minnesota, a sagacious Senator, who had unusual opportunities for appraising it:

For sixteen years he was a member of the Committee on Indian Affairs, where he rendered most valuable and efficient service. No one was better versed than he in all the intricacies of Indian legislation, and no one was more alive than he to the true welfare of the Indians—always on guard to protect and defend them against open and insidious inroads on their rights and interests, but never a block or impediment to the opening and settlement of our vast public domain. His heart went out to the frontiersman, as well as to the Indians. He had none of those hazy and transcendent notions of so-called "Indian rights" or "Indian character" possessed by a school of closet reformers. He gauged the Indian at his true worth and at his real aptitude and ability, and hence he was the most practical and useful friend the Indian had.

One of the first measures which came out of the Indian Committee after he became a member did not meet with his approval. It was a bill "For the relief and civilization of the Chippewa Indians in the State of Minnesota"—briefly, a proposal to sell for the Chippewas the pine timber on their land, valued anywhere from $5,000,000 to $10,000,000, and devote the proceeds to the uses of the Indians, capitalizing the timber for them so that they should receive a fixed income for fifty years, and in certain emergencies five per cent. of the principal. Mr. Platt's reasons for opposing this plan betrayed an intimate knowledge of the Indian character. He declared that the very worst thing that could be done for the Indians was to create such a fund:

I think the result will be that at the end of fifty years these Indians will not be a particle more advanced toward civilization than they are to-day. The truth is that the hardest Indians in the United States to civilize are the richest ones, and in proportion to the amount of their

riches. You cannot break up the tribal relations of a rich tribe of Indians with one half the ease that you can among Indians that have no money. Riches bring a kind of aristocracy among them, and they maintain their manners and their customs and resist every possible attempt to civilize them. You may take their children and send them to school at Carlisle, and when they go back to the tribe they have either to be driven out or to go and adopt the customs and submit themselves to the regulations of the tribe.

This reference to Carlisle touched a phase of the Indian problem upon which he held a decided opinion. For many years he was convinced of the futility of bringing Indian youth East for education with a view to their return to their own people. In the few instances where they had the strength to adhere to their Eastern training, they were cast off by their tribe. More often they returned to the tribe, enfeebled physically and morally, fell back into the old ways, and became the most worthless Indians on the reservation. He held that the missionaries who had gone out and spent their lives among the Indians had done far more good than the Eastern schools or professional philanthropists, although as time went by he grew to value the work done at Carlisle by Capt. R. H. Pratt.

The operation of the treaties with the five civilized tribes he regarded with deep disgust. They had worked in practice to the injury of the Indians, for whose benefit they were originally framed, and their flagrant abuse had resulted in the control of the affairs of the tribes by unscrupulous white men and half-breeds who occupied the most productive lands and profited by a fictitious or mongrel relationship. He held that, under these conditions, the United States was not bound to

abide by the treaties which had been so scandalously diverted from their beneficent purpose. He expressed this opinion forcibly on more than one occasion. During the discussion of the Indian Appropriation bill in April, 1896, he undertook to secure the insertion of an amendment, which would have greatly strengthened the prestige and authority of the Dawes Commission with the five tribes with whom they were empowered to negotiate. The amendment, although favorably reported by the Indian Committee, was opposed by a persistent lobby, and was finally ruled out on a point of order. Some of those who opposed the amendment referred unctuously to the spires of the Indian churches ascending to heaven, "showing that they are followers of that meek and lowly Nazarene, that Man of Galilee, to whom we all bow." The character of the opposition filled the soul of the Connecticut Senator with wrath. He declared that neither in Russia nor Turkey was the despotism of the so-called government in the Indian Territory equalled, and that neither in Cuba nor anywhere else were their atrocities surpassed. The objections to the amendment he said were made, not in the interest of the Indians, but in the interest of white men "who have not a drop of Indian blood in their veins, yet who dominate these tribes and these nations with as heavy a hand as the feudal baron ever dominated the people of his barony." He asserted that in the Indian Territory five hundred men, largely white, with scarcely a half-blood Indian among them, had "seized, appropriated, and hold nine tenths of the agricultural land to the exclusion of those who are entitled equally as citizens of the Territory to the use and benefit of that land; and the moment any measure is proposed looking to a remedy for that

awful injustice, that unholy spoliation of the Indians, our wards, whom we are bound to protect, then Senators are shocked lest some rule of the Senate should be transgressed." Self-government in the Territory, he declared, was more than a failure:

It is a shame, a disgrace, an intolerable nuisance, the five hundred men who have seized the land control it by the corruption of the Legislatures, by the corruption of courts, by the terrorizing of those whose lands they have seized. . . . If it be necessary to override treaties, if in the opinion of any Senator there is anything in the amendment which by any construction or by any stretch of construction can be held as not living up to the letter of the treaties, then I am prepared to say that no more solemn obligation ever rested upon the Senate of the United States than to disregard those treaties. When we make a treaty with an Indian nation, we make it not only for ourselves but for the Indians. We make it with our wards. We make it with a people whose interests we are bound to protect, and when the letter of the treaty is used for the oppression of those people by men who have thrust themselves into the situation for gain and for personal advancement, it becomes our duty to see that the spirit in which the treaty was made is carried out. Five hundred people of the sixty thousand so-called Indians have appropriated the property which belongs to the whole number. Civilization is arrested, progress is arrested, the real Indian is retrograding; he is going back to a state of savagery and barbarism, and all in order that the five hundred robbers and despoilers may be kept in their unlawful possessions. I would not hesitate to disregard a treaty if it were necessary to do so for that purpose.

That these words were not spoken on impulse or without full consideration, is shown by the fact that

earlier in the session Mr. Platt had introduced a joint resolution, declaring:

That the condition of the Indian Territory as regards population, occupation of land, and the absence of adequate government for the security of life and property has so changed since the making of treaties with the five civilized tribes that the United States is no longer under either legal or moral obligation to guarantee or permit tribal Indian government in said Territory, and should at once take such steps as may be necessary to protect the rights and liberties of all the inhabitants of said Territory.

In preparing his first annual message, President McKinley sent for Mr. Platt and asked him to prepare a paragraph covering the condition of affairs in the Indian Territory, with special reference to the ratification of the agreement recently effected by the Dawes Commission with the Choctaws and Chickasaws. Instead of complying literally with this request, Mr. Platt outlined his opinion of the whole Indian problem in a letter to the President, dated December 2, 1897, in the course of which he said:

The condition of affairs in the Indian Territory is a disgrace to our government and our civilization. I do not believe that so unjust, iniquitous, and utterly indefensible a condition of affairs exists in any civilized community in the world. Under the guise of Indian self-government, supposed to be guaranteed by the United States, we permit practical despotism and the perpetration of unbounded injustice.

The treaties made with the Indians dating back to 1838 or thereabouts, with modifications and perhaps sanctions since that date, were made upon the understood agreement between the Indians and the United States, that the Indians should be provided with a territory and a home where they

should live apart from the whites and govern themselves as Indians, having a common tribal title to the land in which every Indian should have an equal interest with every other Indian. . . . The whole situation has been changed not by the United States, but by the action of the Indians themselves.

A territory, nearly equal in extent and fertility to the State of Indiana, has, by operation of Indian laws and the action of Indian governments, been given practically into the possession of a few persons who have little or no Indian blood in their veins, but are recognized as members of the different tribes or nations. And the methods by which they have become possessed, and the Indian enactments under which they hold this vast tract or territory, amount almost to giving them a fee-simple title and occupation. The real Indians, whose interests should be just as much the care of the United States now as when the treaties were made, have been despoiled, their use of lands which have any value has been denied, and their whole condition made more pitiable, I think, than the condition of any other Indians in the United States. . . .

To allow a few persons, recognized indeed by special enactment as Indian citizens, but who are either purely white or with only a small proportion of Indian blood, longer to monopolize these lands, would be an unpardonable neglect of duty on the part of the United States. In making the treaties and conveying the lands to the different tribes, the United States imposed a trust upon the tribal governments, and those governments assumed the obligations of the trust, which were that all the members should have equal rights in the use and occupation of the lands. That trust has been disregarded and wantonly violated by the Indians, and no pettifogging with regard to the language of the treaties and the powers given to the different governments can absolve the United States from its obligation to see that the trust is properly executed. The Indians who have no lands, and can obtain

none, because they have been appropriated by the few so-called Indians, must be protected in their rights and put in possession of their fair share of the tribal property. This can only be done by allotment, either of the use and occupation, or of a full title to the land. . . .

Meanwhile the condition of the white people who have been not only permitted but encouraged to go into the Territory by the Indians, demands the attention of our Government. It is the Indians alone, who are responsible for the presence of the white people, amounting probably to 250,000 domiciled in the Indian Territory, as against less than 70,000 Indians. They are without local government, without the privileges of American civilization, without the opportunity in any way to participate in the government of the country where they are located; white American citizens occupying a country where, by law, so far as the local affairs are concerned, there is only a government of Indians, by Indians, and for Indians in existence. The United States Government certainly owes to these citizens the duty of providing for them the opportunity which other citizens of the United States enjoy, to have a voice in their own government. So that both the interests of the Indians and the protection and the development of our own white citizens imperatively demand that our Government should, without further delay, change the existing conditions in the Indian Territory. There is nothing in the spirit of the treaties to prevent. If it is supposed in the letter of the treaties the United States Government has surrendered its rights both to care for the Indians and protect its own citizens, it is sufficient answer to say to those who insist that nothing shall be done, "that the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

One hobby he had—the appointment of fit persons in the Indian service. He was especially intolerant of the debauching of the service during the second Cleveland administration, under Secretary Hoke Smith.

On one occasion, when the Indian Rights Association urged him to assist the confirmation of some of Smith's appointments, he replied hotly to Herbert Welsh:

If the Secretary of the Interior has in any way reformed, I am glad to hear of it. He has been, with reference to the Indian service and the Territorial service in general, utterly shameless in the matter of his appointments, not that I mean he has always gotten bad men; a man cannot do that always, but he has made them very largely upon political grounds and for political purposes, this last more with regard to officials in Oklahoma, perhaps, than elsewhere. I think it is susceptible of proof that he has said that he proposed to hold the Territory of Oklahoma by his appointments until he brought it in as a Democratic State. I don't want to say harsh things about any one, but I have no patience with the way the Secretary of the Interior has administered his office wherever there has been an opportunity to appoint an impecunious and worthless Democrat. If of late he has done any better than formerly, we ought to be thankful for it. I have not yet seen the evidence of it. The States in which there are Indian reservations are mostly represented by Republican Senators and Representatives, so that under what they call the "Home-rule System" not one of them could have the slightest influence in the matter of appointments. When Mr. Harrison was President, I believe that without exception he appointed men from the States and Territories where the reservations were situated, and by comparison he got a very much better set of officials. I am not sure that it is a rule we ought to follow in all instances. The suggestion, that these men who are now nominated have done well and that their appointment is something in the nature of a promotion, has great force. But as between the practice of appointing from the States and sending carpet-baggers there, I can have but one opinion. I have known a man, appointed and confirmed by

the Senate,—yes, more than one,—whose reputation was that the first inquiry they made on their rounds as Indian inspectors, was for an Indian girl to sleep with. I have known men who were thieves and seducers at home, confirmed by the Senate, when the record was plain. I have been so absolutely disheartened and disgusted with the character of men that were sent from other States to be Indian agents and inspectors, that I am ready to turn to almost anything with the belief that it cannot be worse than what has been done. The appointment of army officers relieved the trouble somewhat so far as character is concerned, but an army officer does not make the best agent always, or indeed usually.

He never hesitated to address himself, with wholesome frankness, to the well-intentioned people who had voluntarily taken upon themselves the responsibility for the proper settlement of the Indian question. When the *Outlook* in March, 1902, published an article on "The Lease of the Standing Rock Reservation," taking Congress and the administration severely to task, he wrote promptly to Dr. Lyman Abbott:

> Some one has sent me the *Outlook* for March 29th, with a marked article by Mr. Kinman, "The Lease of the Standing Rock Reservation." I regret to say that I do not remember to have ever seen, within the same space, so much of statement and insinuation calculated to give an entirely erroneous impression as to the facts as in that article. Surely you cannot suppose that the Secretary of the Interior, and the Indian Commissioner, and Committees of Congress, are either corruptly or stupidly trying to despoil the Indians of their rights.

In the winter of 1900–01, a proposition was brought into the Senate, looking to the construction of a dam across the Gila River, near San Carlos, Arizona, to

store the waters of the river for the benefit of the Pima Indian reservation. The Pima Indians from time immemorial had supported themselves largely by agriculture under irrigation. White settlers on the upper portion of the Gila River, having taken up their lands under government laws, had diverted the water so that the Indians were deprived of its use. Mr. Platt believed that the Government ought, at any practicable cost, to supply water to the reservation for the benefit of the Indians, but he believed also that all the water needed for irrigating lands upon their reservation could be obtained without resorting to the expedient of building a dam 130 miles above the reservation, at an estimated cost of $1,000,000 to $2,000,000.

He recognized in the proposed amendment a scheme to commit the Government to a system of national irrigation—a system to which he was not necessarily opposed, but which he felt should not be entered upon without the most careful consideration. The National Irrigation Association and the Geological Survey earnestly advocated the legislation, and, to supplement their work, the friends of the Indian were rounded up and induced to pelt sympathetic Senators with petitions and appeals. To one of these philanthropists, Mr. Platt responded:

I have an idea, and I may as well express it frankly, that your board, and other people throughout the United States who are friends of the Indians, have overestimated the necessity of spending a couple of million of dollars, more or less, to irrigate the Pima reservation. The plan is being pushed from two sources: One, philanthropic people who desire to subserve the interests of the Indians, and the other, the National Irrigation Association, that has fixed upon this plan to commit the Government to a system

of national irrigation, which if once entered into will cost hundreds, and possibly thousands, of millions of dollars. I myself believe that all the irrigation needed at present by these Indians can be provided without embarking in this very expensive enterprise. I think the sufferings of the Indians have been very much overdrawn. We were told last year that they were in a starving condition, and that it would take at least $50,000 to support them for the year. We appropriated $30,000, of which only $7,000 has been used, and I think that the use of that money has relieved any actual suffering. I believe that with $10,000 expenditure, the work to be performed by the Indians, their lands can be irrigated, for the present at least, and I think that the philanthropic friends of the Indians throughout the United States ought to be very careful that they are not made use of to try to commit the Government to a system of national irrigation.

While he at no time relished the irksome work on the Indian Committee, he nevertheless took quiet satisfaction in the thought that he was rendering a valuable service both to the Indian and to his own Government. When in 1902 he secured an amendment to a bill opening to settlement the Rosebud reservation in South Dakota, by which settlers, instead of obtaining free entry, were required to buy at the rate of $2.50 an acre for their lands, he wrote home to a friend in Meriden:

I suppose the world would go on if I should die, but while I am here in the Senate there is always something depending on me especially. Just now it is the Indian Appropriation bill; next week it will probably be Cuba, if the House passes some bill, and so it goes. What a man does quietly is never known or appreciated. For instance—I put an amendment into a bill to-day for the opening of an Indian reservation which is likely to save the

Government, first and last, if the same policy is continued with reference to other matters of a similar kind, at least $50,000,000. I feel that I have to watch these things, but still I am looking forward to trying to find the time when I can get to Connecticut; wish I could get there on Good-Friday.

When he became Chairman of the Committee on Cuban Relations, he endeavored to escape further service on the Indian Committee, but the urgency of those interested in the integrity of Indian legislation prevailed upon him to remain. To one of these friendly advisers, F. J. Kingsbury, of Waterbury, Connecticut, he wrote, on March 10, 1901:

The Indian question, as it is called, is one of great difficulty. If it is considered from the sympathetic side merely, that is one thing. If it is considered from the practical side, that is often an entirely different thing. It perplexes the wisest and best to know what is to be done in given instances. There is enough work on the Indian Committee to take the entire time of any Senator, and then he would be as uncertain as to the best practical thing to be done as he is now. I have felt that I ought to go off from the Indian Committee, and yet I think it is no egotism to say that for some years I have stood between the Indians and a disposition in a good many quarters to consider the wishes of white people rather than the interests of the Indians. You cannot look at an Indian reservation in this country without seeing a case for the Supreme Court of the United States. The questions arising are most perplexing and complicated. I really have not the time to give to them. I am second on the Judiciary Committee, third on Finance, Chairman of the Committee on Relations with Cuba, either one of which, to say nothing of the Indian Committee, involves great labor, and I feel as if I ought to give some attention, indeed careful consideration, to the great public

questions which loom up now as never before. I do not know what to do about staying on the Indian Committee. Nothing that I can do will satisfy either side, for both the benevolent Indian sympathizers, and those who have no regard for the Indians when the white man's interest is involved, are extremists. Truth here, as in most all matters, lies in the middle.

But with all his discriminating conscientiousness in legislation, it was through the personal side of his relations to the Indian that his service on the Committee had its peculiar value. For twenty years he was the real friend and champion of the Indians, and they regarded him as they would a father. From all over the country the Indians seemed to know that Senator Platt would befriend them, and see that justice would be done, and they always felt free to write him. Of this phase of his experience, one who had peculiarly close relations with Mr. Platt during the last years of his life says:

One characteristic letter, I remember, came from "Mak She Ka Tan No," who made his mark, which was witnessed by "Wm. Myer" and "Sal Williams." This was written from Shawnee, O. T., March 4, 1903, and reads:

"Honorable O. H. Platt, United States Senate, Washington, D. C. Dear Sir: I have been told you know a great deal about Indians and the Indian business, that you are one of the Senate council for that purpose. I am a poor Kickapoo Indian boy. A few years ago when the Government allotted land to the Kickapoo Indians in Oklahoma some of us were left out and got no land. I am a full blood Indian, my father and mother were full blood Kickapoo Indians, and the letter I hand you herewith, which I ask you to transmit to the Secretary of the Interior with such recommendations as you may deem proper, explains to

you that it is in the power of the Government to yet give me an allotment. Trusting you will be kind enough to do something for me, I am

"Mak She Ka Tan No."

Senator Platt took as much trouble and pains with this Indian as he would have taken with any man in Connecticut; he took it up with the Secretary of the Interior, and the matter covered most of the summer; the "Kicking Kickapoo" band was involved, and finally this Indian received his allotment, as well as others shown to be entitled, on the diminished Kickapoo reserve in Kansas.

Even when Senator Platt was obliged to give up his membership on the Committee on Indian Affairs he still helped to scrutinize the Appropriation bill, and was looked to for advice in the Senate, and appealed to by Indians without number or limit.

I think one of the most affecting scenes I witnessed, in connection with his official life, was during the session towards the end of 1903, or 1904. As usual the Indians were in Washington to look after their interests. They had been going to see the Senator, and sending him messages, and going through the regular evolutions, to all of which he gave patient attention. One day a delegation of braves, probably numbering fifty, possibly more, were at the Capitol to see him. He was much pressed for time, as usual, was working on an important amendment to the Indian bill, together with other matters, but he left the Senate floor, and came to his committee-room, walked over and sank down in a chair by the window. An interpreter was present, who seated himself near the Senator, and all the balance ranged themselves around the room, close to the walls, hunched up, watching the Senator intently, who surely was the personification of the "Big White Father."

All he said was: "Now tell me all about it," turning to the interpreter, who proceeded to make explanations, while the Senator sat as silent as the Indians. He asked

some questions, pointing first to one and then to another of the Indians, saying, "Just what is it you want—and why?" He spent a couple of hours, and then rose up, while all those in the room did likewise, and in precisely the same fashion, and then he said, first directly to one and then to another, "That you cannot have; it is not right; you are not entitled to it; the Government does not owe it to you." To another, "I will look into it." To another, always pointing to the one intended, and never confusing any particular request or demand, "you shall have it," and so on. Finally, "I say to you—you shall have justice; I shall look after you." Then straight to the door he walked without a word further or gesture, while the entire delegation muttered the Indian grunt of satisfaction and approval—"Ugh! Ugh! Big Chief! Big White Father!" and all slowly passed out after him, single file. They had formed a line down which he passed much after the fashion of the Indians at the little Catholic Church up at Wequetonsing, Michigan, when the Father passes out from celebrating Mass on Sunday mornings.

Among the eulogies delivered after his death, there was none more fitting than that of Senator Morgan of Alabama, a political opponent, who had seen years of service with him on the Indian Committee:

As the great and proud race of Indians are disappearing from their fatherland, which no Indian would ever desert nor be driven from it save by forces that made death the penalty of resistance, none of them will forget the sympathy of Senator Platt in his patient, just, and humane devotion to the rights that remained to them after more than two centuries of warfare for the maintenance of their original independence. He provided for them in their necessitous condition almost as a father would provide for his family. His great abilities and industrious labors were always engaged in their service when needed, so that none were

neglected; and the records of the Senate are a history of his work that carries honor to his memory on every page that relates to Indian affairs.

His only possible reward was the consciousness of duty well and honestly performed.

The proud and silent nod of the grateful Indian in approbation of the equally proud and silent assistance of the great Senator was the only token of friendship between men who were sternly just in their actions, and neither of them asked nor expected nor granted favors.

CHAPTER X

NEW STATES IN THE WEST

Chairman of Committee on Territories—Instrumental in Admitting Six New States—In Close Touch with the West.

A SYMPATHY as broad as the Continent, an understanding which comprehended the needs and aspirations of every State and Territory helped to make Platt of Connecticut in all the name implies a Senator of the United States. A New Englander of Puritan descent, he was an American citizen first of all, and the star that represented California on the flag was as significant to him as that which marked his native State. His connection with the Indian Committee brought him in close touch with the country beyond the Mississippi, and years of service with the Committee on Territories gave him an acquaintance with the Far West which gained him recognition as the Eastern Senator most conversant with its problems and sympathetic with its aims. He watched the growth of the Western country with satisfaction and pride. It carried to him no message of apprehension for the future of his own region. The threatened encroachments upon the influence of New England did not disturb him. "New England has no fears for the future," he said. "She has heard the cries of 'cotton is king', 'wheat is king,' 'iron is king'; and has heard them unmoved.

She knows there is no real kingship in the United States but the sovereignty of ideas."[1]

Western men learned to trust him and confide in him. He bore toward some of the younger of them an almost paternal relationship, and they went to him like children for encouragement and help. The affection with which they grew to regard him seemed, at times, incongruous with the practical workings of the legislative machine, yet it contributed subtly and oftentimes indispensably to its effective operation. Since his death no one has quite taken the peculiar place he occupied as a link between the East and West.[2]

[1] Speech advocating the admission of Washington, March 3, 1886.

[2] Western men are fond of telling about the positive way in which he handled questions relating to their part of the country, disclosing a shrewd and appreciative understanding of the Western character.

Once when the Utah question was up before the Territories Committee he asked a man who appeared in behalf of the Mormon side: "Do you know Abbott R. Heywood of Ogden? Is he a truthful man?" Heywood was Chairman of the Liberal party in Utah and Mr. Platt was palpably toying with a letter which from the heading evidently came from him. The answer was: "Yes, I know Mr. Abbott R. Heywood and I think that he is a truthful man." The Senator chuckled drily, opened the letter, and said: "You have made a lucky reply. I guess you are a truthful man too. Abbott Heywood says that you are all right and he takes your view of this particular part of the case." Later when statehood was on the point of gaining or losing and his decision was likely to settle the question, he asked for Abbott R. Heywood's opinion and got it. When overzealous friends of statehood had made rash assertions in their eagerness to gain his support he sent for the man whom he had once before tested on Heywood's letter and said: "I 'll take your word and no one else's among the Mormons on this question. Have these people, any of them, been living with their plural wives since the manifesto?" "Yes, Senator," was the reply, "there has been a case now and then, but the Gentiles have not chosen to prosecute it because they believe the Church will discountenance the practice and if the pulpit will range itself with the law it cannot go on." "Well," was Mr. Platt's comment,

It was partly a matter of chance that he had so much to do with the admission of new States to the Union, but while he was Chairman of the Committee on Territories it happened that six stars were added to the flag and that it fell to him to secure the enactment of the bills creating six commonwealths,—a record which stands to the credit of no other public man since the beginning of the Government. It is true that Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Washington, and Wyoming would sooner or later have been admitted to the sisterhood of States, for the times were ripening for the change, but the date and manner of their admission might have been far different had it not been for the tact and integrity of the Senator who had their fortunes in charge, and for the confidence which he inspired. A narrow-minded partisan in his position might have been a serious obstacle in the way. But Platt was broad enough to grasp the true significance of the development of the West. He believed with Seward that Territories should be transformed into States just as soon as local circumstances justified the change. He held to the conviction that the sooner a Territory emerges from its provincial condition the better, and the sooner the people are admitted to participate in the responsibilities of government, the stronger and more vigorous the State those people form will be; that the longer the process of pupilage the greater will be the effect of federal patronage and federal influence upon them. To his mind there were four conditions of admission. First, there must be sufficient territory; second, that territory must have

"they say that you are New England folks out in Utah. If you are and will live up to New England traditions you will soon get into line for the country and you will stand by it to the death."

the requisite population; third, it must have resources which promise development; fourth, it must have a people whose character is a guarantee of a republican form of government. Throughout his career in the Senate, he favored the admission of new States whenever these conditions were fulfilled. In advocating the admission of the State of Washington in 1886, he said:

> Whatever the future may develop with regard to the acquisition of territory—whatever we may think with regard to Alaska, which is territory acquired outside of what I may call our integral territory, it seems to me that with reference to the territory which we have, which is now circumscribed by the lines which bound upon the north what is called "The United States," there can be no question but that the same rule of admission is to be applied now with regard to those territories as has been applied in the past. The people of those Territories are not full American citizens, are not fully entitled to the rights of other citizens of the United States, do not fully illustrate the principles of self-government, until they are admitted to become participants in the general union of States.

It has been said that in this admission of new Western States he saw no reason to fear for the influence of New England. He recognized that, as the country grew in wealth and population, New England of necessity would count for less and less in a material way and that her influence must depend upon the character of her people and her representatives. But he took an even broader view than that. He saw with a prophet's eye that her real supremacy must be maintained through the right development of the country to the West, and he protested earnestly against the theory advanced by some that her true policy was to prevent if possible any

addition to the existing number of States lest she should be shorn of a portion of the strength she then possessed. Pleading for Washington in 1886, and speaking for New England, he said her Senators were haunted by no such fear:

The policy of New England with respect to national growth has never been one of exclusion or repression; on the contrary, it has been the policy of the admission of new States and the consequent enhancement of national strength. Examine the record, and you will find that opposition to the admission of States has not come from New England either in the Senate or House. We have learned, and we know full well, that we cannot maintain our place and influence in the national household by numerical power. It takes but a few years in the great march of national progress to build up new communities that in population and wealth and numerical representation can more than compete with New England. No, sir; we understand if, as we hope and trust, New England is to maintain in the future as she has in the past a conspicuous, if not potential, place in the councils of the nation she must base her claim to such notice on something besides numbers or wealth.

We have learned, indeed we have always realized, that there are invisible forces which can make a small State great; that the true sources of power are in the brains and hearts of a people, be they many or few. So long as New England can maintain for her citizens a high standard of intelligence, of virtue, and national love, I have no misgivings as to the position she will occupy in the Republic. If her Senators can truly and worthily represent a people with such characteristics, they need never fear that their voice will be unheeded. Once New England cast exactly one third of the votes in this branch of the national legislature. Now she casts less than one sixth of them, and yet she does not feel that she has been shorn of her strength or that her influence has departed or waned. . . .

Why should New England be thought to fear or regret the admission of new States? Cast your eye along the parallels of latitude which stretch from the Atlantic coast to the Pacific shore. Study the characteristics of that marvellous civilization which has redeemed the land and subjugated the forces of nature along those parallels. Take note of the people who along those lengthened lines have builded cities, developed agriculture, penetrated the deep recesses of the earth, created a highway, yes, highways for the nation, established the institutions of education and religion, elevated and glorified mankind. Who are they? Are they not bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh? The blood of New England courses along every artery of national life. Put your finger on the pulse of enterprise as it beats in Walla Walla, or Seattle, or Tacoma, or Port Townsend, and you will feel the heart-throb of New England. Who are these men who to-day are asking the Senate permission to enjoy the full privileges of American citizenship in the new State of Washington? True, they have gathered from many States; they have come even from foreign lands, from lands beyond the sea; a new people indeed, but how many of them can trace back their vigor and force to the ancestral cottage which stood on the New England hillside, their patriotism to the village green, and their virtue to the New England church? The voice which I bring to them to-day from their ancestral States is, "Come in, and welcome."

Washington was not admitted as a State during the Forty-ninth Congress. The bill for its admission passed the Senate, providing for the incorporation of the Panhandle of Idaho into the new State, but the measure did not pass the House. When the proposal came again in the Fiftieth Congress, in 1888, Mr. Platt favored the admission of a State containing the original boundaries of Washington and leaving Idaho undisturbed, a

provision which finally prevailed, although not favored by the majority of the Territories Committee. In the Fiftieth Congress, the Committee on Territories reported favorably four bills looking to the admission of new States into the Union—Washington, Montana, and the two Dakotas. It had been proposed to admit the northern half of the Territory of Dakota as a State under the name of "Lincoln." The people of the Territory objected, and several Democratic Senators, among them Mr. Butler of South Carolina, took them to task for what was termed a lack of reverence for the name of the great emancipator. Mr. Platt confessed his sympathy with the people of the Territory in this.

"The condition is such," he said, "that the name of Dakota cannot be taken away from either portion of the Territory without injustice, and without doing violence to the wishes and feelings of the Territory."

As for the charge of irreverence brought by Mr. Butler, he said:

> Suppose that some one should propose to change the name of the Senator and call him by the name of the most illustrious of all Presidents, the father of his country, and that his name henceforth, instead of being Matthew C. Butler should be Matthew C. Washington, and that he should object and say, "My name is Butler; I do not desire to change it." Would he be held lacking in respect and admiration for the great name of Washington? Not at all. And no more are the soldiers of North Dakota, who followed the flag and carried the musket, who, under the lead of the great Lincoln, preserved the Government when it was assailed—no more are they to be charged with being wanting in respect to the name of Lincoln. I congratulate the Senator from South Carolina, and I congratulate the country on his new-born zeal and admiration for the memory of Lincoln.

The Democrats in the House, having a majority there, and enjoying the support of a Democratic administration, not unnaturally undertook to prevent the admission of four Republican States on the eve of an election for President, and made an issue by proposing the admission of Dakota as one State while New Mexico was to be brought in as a Democratic balance. A caucus of the Democrats of the House adopted this resolution:

Resolved, That it is the sense of the caucus that an enabling act for the Territories of Dakota, Montana, Washington, and New Mexico should be passed at this session, providing for constitutional conventions in each Territory, and the submission of those constitutions for ratification at an election in November, 1888, substantially as provided for in the bill reported by the Committee on Territories at this session.

Mr. Platt contended that the people of the southern part of Dakota had a right to participate in the next election for President; that they ought to have been admitted long ago. He declared that Congress had been derelict in its duty, that it had temporized and postponed the creation of the State until it had become 400,000 strong, a population greater than that of Rhode Island, Vermont, New Hampshire, Delaware, Florida, Oregon, Nebraska, Nevada, or Colorado, and that the fact that another presidential election was approaching was no reason why they should now be denied admission into the Union as quickly as it could be done. He quoted the treaty with France ceding the Territory of Louisiana of which Dakota was a part, and the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, as extended in 1834, to show that the people of the Territory had morally a right to

be admitted to the Union. At the same time he contended that the Territory was too large to be admitted as one State. It was larger by 27,000 square miles than England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales—practically as large as New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, and Virginia, and capable of supporting as large a population:

> Even if the sentiment of the people were not adverse to it and the people had a dream of empire to grow out of the admission of such a great State, yet Congress, having reference to the physical equality of all the States, ought not to think of admitting one State into the Union so capable of sustaining a dense population.

The idea of proper self-government repelled the notion that such a State would not be too large. It was impossible for the common people to take part in the concerns of a State of that size. The expense of travel to conventions and to the Legislature would practically shut them out from a participation in the privileges of government, relegating the conduct of affairs to the rich or unscrupulous. It would amount also to a practical denial of the administration of justice in the courts. Poor people must have their courts near at hand:

> Good statesmanship will avoid the creation of imperial States. I heard it said during the discussion last year that if we would divide Dakota and divide other Territories the Senate would become a mob. At most it could not have more than one hundred members if we admitted all the Territories, dividing Dakota, and, I think, splitting up Texas into five States besides; but it is better that the Senate should be so enlarged, that it should represent the popular will and feel the popular pulse, than that a State should be admitted which would have an abnormally large

representation in the House of Representatives. It is to the danger, it is to the disadvantage of smaller States and medium-sized States that any State should have an abnormally large representation in the House of Representatives.

The act enabling the people of the two Dakotas, Montana, and Washington, to form constitutions and State governments, was passed in the next session, and was approved by President Cleveland on February 22, 1889.

In the first session of the Fifty-first Congress in 1890, Mr. Platt as Chairman of the Committee on Territories, secured the enactment of bills admitting to statehood Idaho and Wyoming. There was a Republican majority in both Senate and House, and the opposition to these bills was perfunctory, though, in the case of Wyoming, there was a question as to the advisability of admitting to full participation in the privileges of statehood a community where women would be permitted to vote under the constitution. To this Mr. Platt responded that while he had never been an advocate of woman suffrage, he would not keep a Territory out of the Union because its constitution allowed women to vote, nor would he force upon a Territory any restriction or qualification as to what the vote should be in that respect. Both the Idaho and Wyoming bills were passed and the two new States were admitted, one on July 3, 1890, the other on July 11th.

It was six years before the admission of another State. Utah was admitted in 1896, and Oklahoma in 1907. In the first session of the Fifty-second Congress, in 1892, the Committee on Territories reported a bill for the admission of New Mexico. Mr. Platt did not join in the report, and questioned whether, in view of

statistics and facts, New Mexico was entitled to admission. When the attempt was made ten years later to admit Arizona and New Mexico, with Oklahoma and the Indian Territory, Mr. Platt, although not then a member of the Committee, strongly opposed the admission of the four new States. He was ready to admit Oklahoma and the Indian Territory as one State, and that finally came about, but his influence, which was very powerful, was exerted against any other conclusion than this. To his friend, L. F. Parker of St. Louis, who favored giving the Indian Territory a delegate in Congress, he wrote, on March 25, 1903:

> There is much in what you say in your letter of November 20th, but I do not feel like doing anything which may seem to have the apparent effect of looking toward statehood for the Indian Territory alone. I have pretty decided notions on that subject. Oklahoma and the Indian Territory have, of course, sufficient population for statehood, when compared with many States we have admitted, but I believe it is best for the country and best for both Oklahoma and the Indian Territory, that when they do come in, they shall come as one State. States are made altogether too easily and thoughtlessly now. I do not know that the allowance of a delegate would affect the matter, but Alaska is asking for one, as well as the Indian Territory—both are in somewhat unorganized condition, and between us, I do not think there is any necessity for one from either. I do not mean by this to say that I would oppose it, but am merely expressing my own feeling about it.

During all his association with the Committee on Territories and the Committee on Indian Affairs, Mr. Platt scrupulously refrained from interfering in the purely local questions involved, save where it was necessary in the enactment of legislation. Above all

he kept himself aloof from the scrambles for office. His reply in 1889 to one who wrote him in behalf of an applicant for the governorship of New Mexico is typical of his attitude in all such things:

I have felt that it would be a mistake for me to recommend particular persons for appointment in Territories —in any of them. By reason of my position as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Territories, and the very severe struggle to get the four Territories admitted, viz.: Washington, Montana, and the two Dakotas, I have come to occupy a position where my endorsement is very much sought by applicants for positions in those Territories. I am in no way qualified to recommend the persons to fill the offices, and if I should recommend one, I would displease the others. So I have thought that the best interests of the Territories required that I should not make recommendations. I am very much interested in having President Harrison adopt the policy of immediate change of officers and make appointments from the Territories and not from the outside. I have told him that I have no men to push, but that I do believe that the interests of the Republican party require immediate action. And I have even declined to express an opinion when asked by him, as to the comparative merits of candidates—not in New Mexico, but in one of the other Territories. I think I can do more for the Territories in that position than to try to get this or that man appointed, and there is no middle ground. I must either make recommendations in all the Territories or in none. I think you will coincide with me in saying this is the wisest thing to do. But if not, I have already taken this position with the President, and do not see how I can change.

His service with the Committee on Territories lasted for twelve years,—from 1883 to 1895. During the first four years Benjamin Harrison was Chairman of the

Committee and Platt sat next to him at the table; during the six years from 1887 to 1893, Platt was Chairman of the Committee; from 1893 to 1895, the Democrats were in control. The work which he did during this period gave him great satisfaction, and on the rare occasions when he enumerated his achievements in legislation he always laid stress upon the new States he had a hand in creating; but perhaps the greatest value of his service was in the experience it gave him with the practical problems of territorial government which came so well in play when the time arrived to consider the graver questions growing out of the organization of strange territory through the war with Spain.

CHAPTER XI

THE FOREIGN-BORN AMERICAN

Restriction of Immigration—Advocate of Reasonable Legislation—His Opinion of the Adopted Citizen.

THE preservation of the quality of American citizenship was a thing which all his life appealed powerfully to this typical American of English ancestry. At the same time, he was broad enough in his humanity to understand the aspirations of the alien seeking to better his condition by migrating to our shores, and practical enough to recognize the economic value of the implement thus thrust into our hands. He believed in immigration and was for welcoming every worthy stranger who wandered this way for a home. It is true that in his early manhood he had been affiliated with the American or "Know-Nothing" party and had served as Chairman of its State Committee, but this was not because he subscribed to the party's bigoted anti-foreign creed. It was because he saw in its organization the most effective agency then at hand to advance the Anti-Slavery cause. As time went by and he saw the deserted homesteads in the Litchfield hills gradually renewing their life through the influx of thrifty Swedes, he grew to appreciate the value of the healthy blood infused into the veins of a thinning countryside, and he appreciated also the importance of maintaining the wholesomeness of the inflowing stream. For the

French-Canadians who had come to the mill towns of the Connecticut valley in great numbers, he had a high regard. He seized more than one occasion in the Senate to record his commendation of their sterling qualities:

I have known these people for forty years in the city where I reside [he said in the course of the debate on the Wilson-Gorman Tariff bill in 1894], and I am proud to number among them very many valued acquaintances, social acquaintances, with whom I am as glad to associate as with any of the citizens of my town. They are, as a rule, intelligent, industrious, thrifty, and conservative; they make good citizens; they accumulate property, they are mechanics, agriculturists, and merchants, and among them are many scholars, authors, and men representing the different professions; they assimilate with our native population; their children intermarry with ours; they are quiet and unostentatious; they make no trouble, and after a period of residence here they can scarcely be distinguished from our own native population.

Their children attend our schools, take prizes in competition with the children of the old inhabitants of Connecticut, and in no respect can they be taunted with being an inferior or undesirable people. Usually they accumulate property, and they do not return to Canada carrying away the money which they have earned here. They do not supplant our American workman by accepting lower wages. They work for the same wages that the native workman receives; they work beside him at the same bench or on the same machine. There is no prejudice against them. They are a church-going and a religious people, moral as well as industrious. They do not appear in our police courts, but they do take part, as they should, in our town meetings.

But he was not blind to the fact that all immigrants were not of the character of the Swedes and French-

Canadians who settled in his own State, and throughout his service in the Senate he invariably supported measures to exclude the undesirable.

In the second session of the Forty-eighth Congress in 1884, a law was enacted to prohibit the importation and migration of foreigners and aliens under contract or agreement to perform labor in the United States, its Territories, and the District of Columbia. Mr. Platt not only voted for it but spoke for it:

It is a bill [he said] which proposes to declare, as I understand, two things, and therefore I am in favor of it: First, that the policy of this Government is to protect its laboring men, its workers, to protect them to the extent that they shall be elevated rather than degraded, that they shall be educated rather than made ignorant, that they shall be honored rather than despised; and second, I understand the principle of this bill to be that labor in this country belongs of right to the laborers who are now resident here, and to such other laborers as shall voluntarily come here to join those resident here in the performance of that labor, and I have no hesitation in saying that a practice which contradicts and violates these principles is a crime against the Republic, a crime against its social order, and a crime against its system of government.

It is impossible to bring foreign laborers here under contract without assailing all these principles which I have been enunciating. I am opposed to importing laborers as we import horses and cattle. I am opposed to what may be called involuntary immigration into this country. I am not opposed to voluntary immigration. I regard voluntary immigration as one of the chief sources of our strength, as a factor which has developed and is further to develop the grandest civilization that this continent or the world has ever known, and to make our own the most prosperous, the most powerful, and the most beneficent of

all the nations of the earth. I believe that the admixture with our native races of those who come here imbued with the principles of this Government, seeking to better their condition, honestly desiring to work in this land of freedom, tends to build us up as a people and to ennoble all our citizens.

I have never been in favor of involuntary immigration. I voted against the Chinese bill, not because I was in favor of Chinamen being brought here under contract for labor, but simply because I thought that there were in that bill sections and clauses which prohibited voluntary immigration into this country, which shut out the man who desired of his own accord, of his own free will, to come here and become a part of us; because men were shut out from this country by that bill, as I understood it, simply on account of their being laborers who wanted to labor in this country. I will go as far as any other man to prohibit bringing contract labor here, whether it be Chinese, or Italian, or Hungarian, or English, or French, or Irish.

It is that principle against which I contend, and in so doing I recognize and uphold the right of any human being on this globe who himself, of his own motive, of his own desire, his own free will, wishes to come here and become part of us, and honestly partake of the benefits of labor in this country, to come without hindrance or restriction. My doctrine is that no importation of laborers to lower the rate of American wages should be permitted, and no voluntary immigration of honest laborers should be prevented.

He supported the bill which became a law on March 3, 1891, amending and systematizing the immigration laws, and he voted for the bill which was vetoed by President Cleveland on March 2, 1897, establishing an educational test. Beyond those regulations he did not see how it was possible to restrict immigration without excluding people who ought not to be excluded. During the consideration of the Immigration bill which

ON THE WAY TO STEEP ROCK

became a law on March 4, 1903, he was instrumental in securing an amendment, the absence of which might have proved embarrassing to the enforcement of the law, when he caused the word "immigrant" to be stricken out after the word "alien." Had the original expression been retained, it would have been possible for any alien coming to the United States to escape the provisions of the law by declaring his intention to return to his own country.

His creed with regard to immigration he expounded in the course of the speech which he made during the debate on the Chinese Exclusion bill, September 7, 1888:

I hold that a citizen of any country on the face of this earth has a right to leave that country and to transfer his allegiance to another country with the consent of the Government to which he endeavors to transfer his allegiance. That right, I think, is too sacred in American history to be denied or impeached or in any way invaded.

I hold just as firmly to our right not to receive a man who may thus expatriate himself and desire to come to this country as I do to his right to come with our consent. I hold that we have a right to so regulate, restrain, restrict, or prohibit immigration into this country, as that our own country and our own people shall not suffer by that immigration, as that the character of our own people shall not be in any sense degraded or suffer by such immigration. I hold that we ought to receive any person who thus desires to leave a foreign country and come to our shores and who can comply with certain conditions which are necessary to be complied with in order that our civilization, our labor, and the character of our people shall be in no sense lessened, interfered with, or degraded.

If, then, a man coming from another country is honest, is reputable, is able to take care of himself, is healthy, is the head of a family, is of capacity to understand our

system of government, and is sincerely desirous of casting in his lot with us and ultimately becoming a citizen of this Government, I hold we have no right to exclude him. But if on the other hand that person belongs to the criminal, or to the pauper, or the diseased or vicious class, we ought to exclude him. We have no room here for that class of immigrants. We have no room for criminals, paupers, diseased, vicious people in all our wide domain. We ought also to exclude people who have no sympathy with us or with our form of government or with our institutions.

The very clause in our statute of naturalization is a guide to us in this respect. Before an alien can become a naturalized citizen he must make it appear to the satisfaction of the court admitting him to citizenship that during his residence in the United States "he has behaved as a man of good moral character, is attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United States, and well disposed to the good order and happiness of the same." I would not admit to these shores, if I could apply the test, a single individual who had not capacity enough to understand something of our system of government, and to have an aspiration for the liberty and independence and the dignity which a man may acquire and achieve under our system of government. No anarchists, no communists, no persons, from wherever they may come, who do not come here imbued with the principles first laid down, in the history of the world, in that glorious Declaration of Independence, should be permitted to come, if I could apply the individual test which would keep them away.

CHAPTER XII

FAIR PLAY TOWARDS CHINA

Chinese Exclusion—Opposes Act of 1882—Unsuccessful Attempt to Amend Geary Act—Legislation of 1888—Prevents Drastic Legislation in 1902 and 1904.

DENNIS KEARNY, the sand lots agitator of San Francisco, was in the midst of his crusade against the Chinese, at the time Mr. Platt entered the Senate. The anti-Chinese cry in California had been growing in volume for a long time. In 1876, it had reached such proportions that both political parties inserted in their platforms planks regarding it; the Democrats demanding legislation to prevent further Mongolian immigration, the Republicans calling upon Congress to investigate the effects of the immigration and importation of Mongolians upon the moral and material interests of the country. In 1878, Congress had passed an act "to restrict the immigration of Chinese into the United States," which President Hayes had vetoed, on the ground that the legislation was in violation of the existing treaty negotiated in 1868 by Mr. Seward and Mr. Burlingame. The House declined to pass the bill over the veto. President Hayes thereupon proceeded to negotiate two treaties with China—one relating to commercial intercourse, the other relieving the United States from the provisions of the Burlingame treaty and permitting the exclusion of Chinese laborers. This treaty, signed in 1880, was ratified July 19, 1881, and at

the next session of Congress a bill was introduced by Senator Miller of California, the avowed object of which was "to enforce treaty stipulations relating to the Chinese." The bill forbade the coming of Chinese into the United States for a period of twenty years, and was drastic in its provisions. Mr. Platt could not bring himself to vote for it. He believed it violated the spirit of the treaty as well as the principles of natural rights and justice. On March 8, 1882, he delivered a speech in opposition to the measure, which was emphatic and comprehensive. "To prevent possible damage or alleviate a real misfortune," he said, "I cannot consent to the infraction even of the spirit of a treaty, while professing to be bound by it." He reminded the Senate that a treaty was "a contract between nations" and should be kept like every other contract, in the spirit in which it was made:

> We made this contract which we call a treaty with the Chinese Government, and we must keep it. We must keep it or stand forever disgraced in the eyes of the world. There is no way in which an individual can so soon and so thoroughly forfeit the respect of the community in which he lives as to be sharp in making a contract and sharp in taking an unfair advantage under the contract which the other contracting party never expected that he would take. There is no way in which a nation can so surely forfeit the respect of all other nations as to make that contract called a treaty in shrewdness, and then as shrewdly take advantage of the technical terms of that treaty to accomplish what the other contracting party never intended should be accomplished.

But aside from the fact that the bill was in violation of the treaty, Mr. Platt opposed it because:

> The true intent and meaning of it is to declare that

henceforth, excepting only the Chinese now here, and the colored people now here, no man shall work in the United States except he be a white man.

He could not give his adherence to such a principle:

In the right to work honestly, the Chinaman is your equal and my equal and the equal of every living man, and I will never consent to the passage of any bill which contravenes that principle. Do not misunderstand me. I do not say the Chinaman is the equal of the Anglo-Saxon socially or intellectually. What I do say is that, other conditions being equal, he has the same right to come to this country and work that any white foreigner has.

Mr. President, it will not do to put this legislation on that ground. It will not do to say that a white man who has all the characteristics and habits of a Chinaman and who will work as cheap as a Chinaman may come and labor here and a Chinaman may not, because, forsooth, he is a Mongolian. It will not do to invite white men to come and labor, no matter how cheap they may labor, and forbid a Chinaman to come and labor at the same wages. You must put this legislation on some other ground than the ground of race or color.

Having given the reasons for his opposition to the bill, Mr. Platt went on to suggest certain conditions under which he could vote for legislation on the subject:

I would vote for a bill which did not improperly regulate or limit, or unreasonably suspend the immigration of Chinese laborers. I would vote for a bill which should prevent them coming to this country in such numbers as to endanger our political and social institutions. I would vote for a bill which would prevent their coming here as laborers in such numbers as to ruin labor. I would vote for a bill which should prevent their coming here, if they

degrade labor or make it dishonorable. But I cannot vote for a bill which has for its only object, for its only aim and result, the extirpation and the exclusion of the Chinaman from this country. . . . I am willing, and I put on record my willingness, to vote for any law we may properly pass, any law we can pass without violation of treaty obligations, to the end that the labor market of this country shall not be over-supplied by immigration from any quarter; that there shall be no undue and ruinous competition in labor; that honest labor shall not be dishonored or degraded anywhere; that the standard of labor shall be fairly remunerative everywhere; that the man who is willing to do honest work with hand or brain, or both, shall receive wages enough to enable him to live respectably, to educate his children, and respect himself.

But the tide of sentiment was too strong. The Senate voted down an amendment reducing the period of exclusion from twenty years to ten, and on March 9, 1882, passed the bill in all its criminal enormity, by a vote of 29 to 15. Mr. Platt had a general pair with Mr. Johnston of Virginia, and so could not be recorded, but in announcing his pair, he said: "I regret very much that I am not permitted, by reason of the pair, to vote against the bill." He had respectable company in the minority: Aldrich, Allison, David Davis, Dawes, Edmunds, Frye, Hoar, Ingalls, and Morrill, among others.

The bill passed the House a little later, and President Arthur vetoed it, in his message of April 4th, on the ground that both good faith and good policy forbade the suspension of Chinese immigration for so long a period as twenty years. The Senate refused to pass the bill over the veto. A few weeks later, a bill was passed providing for suspension for ten years, instead of twenty,

and making other modifications. Mr. Platt was one of fifteen Senators to vote against this bill, but it was signed by the President on May 6, 1882.

For six years there was comparative quiet in Washington, so far as anti-Chinese legislation was concerned, although the feeling in the West became more and more intense. In the Cleveland administration a treaty was negotiated with China, under which the Chinese Government was to prohibit the emigration of laborers, and the United States was to protect from violence those already in this country. While this treaty was still pending, one of the most disgraceful episodes of American politics was written into the records of Congress. Mr. Cleveland had been renominated and the Presidential campaign was on. William L. Scott of Pennsylvania, a leading member of the House, was also a leading member of the Executive Committee of the Democratic National Committee. He was regarded as President Cleveland's spokesman in Congress. On Monday, September 3, 1888, without previous notice, an extraordinary bill was brought into the House by Mr. Scott, the President's friend, amending the Act of 1882, by striking out all permission for a Chinese to return to this country for any purpose, after having once left it, and declaring all return certificates void—in fact, barring the United States to any Chinese workman once outside its boundaries. The bill, which was thought to have been prepared at the White House, was rushed through the House that Monday morning within half an hour of its introduction. It was a spectacular political trick, so timed that neither party in Congress could afford to oppose it in the face of a Presidential election. Mr. Platt voted for the bill under protest, and voiced his protest in the Senate:

If a vote is now pressed upon this bill I shall vote for it, and I desire to state the reasons, and I desire also to state some reasons why I shall do it under protest, for I do not intend that any action of mine shall be misunderstood or misrepresented.

I do not like the way this bill has come before Congress, and I want to say so as emphatically as I know how. In May last the Senate of the United States advised and consented to a treaty which had been negotiated with China and communicated to the Senate by the President. We were told by those representing the Pacific Coast, and we have heard it over and over again, that the treaty as it came to the Senate was not satisfactory and would not accomplish the object in view, namely, the exclusion of Chinese laborers from this country. Being told that, the Senate amended the treaty in a way which was proposed by the representatives of the Pacific Coast and in a manner which they told us would be entirely satisfactory and would have the effect of preventing Chinese laborers from coming to this country in competition with our home labor. The treaty was so amended and passed the Senate. Following that treaty the Senate passed a bill on the 8th of August, 1888, to carry into effect the provisions of that treaty when ratifications should be exchanged—a bill which I think received the unanimous support of the Senate, a bill which I approved and which I still approve. . . . The treaty has been submitted to the Chinese authorities for the exchange of ratifications. The bill, after having passed the Senate, went to the House of Representatives, was concurred in by the House, and on the first day of September, 1888, was taken to the President of the United States for his approval, and remains before him at the present time. This was last Saturday. With that bill, which, if the treaty is to be ratified by the Chinese Government, goes as far as any human being in the United States has asked Congress to go in the exclusion of Chinese laborers—with that bill passed by both Houses, now in the hands of the President

of the United States for approval or rejection, there comes here another act, based upon the assumption that this treaty is not to be ratified. As I say, the bill passed by both Houses of Congress was delivered to the President of the United States last Saturday, the first day of September. On last Monday, the third day of September, there came to us from the House of Representatives the bill now under consideration.

If, as every Senator here thinks, if, as the whole country believes, the bill under consideration emanated from the Executive Department, and was started in hot haste immediately after the laying before the President of the United States of a bill passed by Congress upon the subject, it seems to me to be an Executive interference with the legislative branch of the Government, and I am bound in my character as a Senator to make that remark. . . .

I can not say that this bill is written upon the paper of the Executive Department. I know it is generally believed in both Houses of this Congress that it is. I can not say that the most potential man in the Democratic National Committee in the management of this campaign came from the White House to the Capitol with this bill; but it is generally believed in this chamber and throughout the Union. If there has been no official notice or unofficial intimation that this treaty has been rejected or is to be rejected by the Chinese Government, why this hot haste to override the act now lying before the Executive for his approval, and to pass this bill, which under such circumstances would be a direct insult to a nation with whom at least we are desirous of continuing friendly commercial relations? Is this a vote-catching performance? Has it come to this that public office is to be prostituted for Democratic electioneering purposes? And if not, what other reason is there for thrusting in this untimely way this bill upon the attention of Congress? . . .

This bill being here, being bound as a Senator, in spite of all the circumstances which point to other conclusions,

to assume that the Executive and the State Department and the Democratic National Committee have some knowledge which has not been communicated to us, that this treaty is not to be ratified, I am going to vote for the bill, and I am going to do so because I am heartily and sincerely in favor of prohibiting and preventing any immigration into this country of a character which we ought not to receive. . . . I put my vote for this bill solely on the ground that I can not assume that there is no necessity for it. If the treaty which we agreed to here is to be ratified by the Chinese Government, and if the bill which we have already passed to carry the treaty into effect is to be approved by the President of the United States, I can not see the necessity for this bill. But I will not, as a Senator, assume that this bill has no necessity behind it, and that it is simply and purely an electioneering trick, a performance on the part of the Democratic party and its high officials to catch votes in certain quarters of the United States.

Only three members of the Senate, Hoar of Massachusetts, Brown of Georgia, and Wilson of Iowa, voted against the bill, and many of those who voted for it under the stress of what was represented by the administration spokesmen to be a great emergency, lived to regret their record. One of these was Mr. Platt, who later took advantage of the opportunity to make amends.

In 1892, when the ten years' period specified in the Act of 1882 was approaching an end, Mr. Geary of California presented in the House a bill to prohibit absolutely the coming of Chinese persons into the United States. The bill, having passed the House, came up for action in the Senate, April 25, 1892. Mr. Platt offered an amendment, providing that the Act of October 1, 1888, should be excepted from the laws then in force, prohibiting and regulating Chinese im-

migration, which should be "continued in force for a period of ten years from the passage of this act."

The Scott law had met with remonstrance from the Chinese Government, as in contravention of the treaty of 1880, and strong representations against it had been made to our Government, which persistently ignored them. Mr. Platt declared that he could not vote for the bill without his amendment, and explained that he had voted for the Scott bill under protest. His amendment was rejected by a vote of eight to forty-five, and the bill was passed without a roll-call.

At the end of a second ten-year period, in 1902, Mr. Platt again had an opportunity to make an impress on Chinese legislation. A convention with China of October 8, 1894, had restored the conditions of return to the earlier status. In 1902, a bill passed the House to prohibit the coming into, and to regulate the residence within, the United States, of Chinese and persons of Chinese descent. It was a long bill, putting into law all Treasury regulations and drastic provisions with regard to the way the law should be administered. When the bill came to the Senate, it gave rise to long debate and grave differences. The bill was pending for months. Mr. Platt finally solved the difficulties by presenting a substitute for the bill, which, with some modifications, was accepted by Congress. The effect was to continue all laws then in force, with a provision that the laws were "re-enacted, extended, and continued, so far as the same are not inconsistent with treaty obligations."

In January, 1904, the Chinese Government gave notice of the termination on December 7th, of the treaty of 1894, not because she wished to secure admission for her laborers into the United States, but because she

wished to make a new treaty which should define more specifically the word "laborers" and thus accord to the higher classes the privilege of coming into the United States. Mr. Patterson of Colorado introduced a bill with the avowed object of meeting the situation thus created. The bill was complicated, technical, and stringent. Its effect would have been to exclude bankers, commercial brokers, and all persons of the higher classes, as well as laborers; to give to immigration officers additional means to harass the Chinese, and still further to widen the breach between China and the United States. For one thing, it provided that the words "Chinese person" or "persons of Chinese descent" should be construed to mean any person descended from an ancestor of the Mongolian race, "which ancestor is now, or was at any time subsequent to the year 1800, a subject of the Emperor of China."

Mr. Platt took the lead in opposing the bill. He pointed out that it would exclude "a great many Japanese, all Koreans, a very large proportion of Filipinos," for they had Mongolian ancestors who were subjects of the Emperor of China within the last one hundred years:

> If they have one particle of Chinese blood from an ancestor of 110 years ago, they are to be excluded on the statement of the inspector that he believes they had such an ancestor, unless right then and there they can prove the contrary.

Mr. Platt dissected the bill section by section. He was in constant communication with the White House, restraining the President, who had it in mind to send a special message to Congress, and keeping him advised as to developments in the Senate. The bill failed to

become a law, and Mr. Platt's part in chloroforming it was generously recognized. Among the letters of approval, he had this from a former Secretary of State:

I congratulate you and the country on your effective effort respecting the Chinese Exclusion amendment. You have saved us from some very discreditable legislation.

CHAPTER XIII

SOUND FINANCE

First Essays in Finance—Refunding Bill of 1881—Speech of February 17th—Proposes Abolition of Tax on Bank Circulation.

FINANCIAL questions are proverbially among the most troublesome topics which come before Congress. They lead to bitter differences of opinion, to unreasoning debate, to sectional and class hatred. Beyond all other subjects of legislation, those affecting the coinage, banking, loans, and currency should be religiously divorced from politics, yet they can generally be depended upon to excite political feeling and accentuate party alignments, so that it is impossible to consider them in accordance with simple business principles, to say nothing of recognized principles of finance. There have been few questions about which charlatans have so freely had their say or about which men conspicuously lacking in the qualities which inspire confidence have presumed so cheerfully to meddle with the operations of a complex governmental machine. Not only does public finance have a curious fascination for theorists and those with badly balanced minds, but it too often weaves a spell on public men devoted to its study, deluding them with some fantastic scheme impossible to execute, even though it were to take the place of the admittedly imperfect system now in force. The wonder is that on the whole, through years of

turmoil, compromise, and blind experiment, the government has waxed strong financially, and that a system which, like Topsy, has "just growed," should have so many merits and so few defects. That chaos has not sprung from ceaseless agitation and the promulgation of queer ideas is due in no small measure to the influence of men of common sense like Platt, who, while pretending to no mastery of the theories of finance, have kept more eager spirits from plunging into rash extremes. Platt never claimed to be a financier, and he was quite content to leave to others the authoritative exposition of monetary principles. It was many years before he attained a position on the Finance Committee, yet it may be doubted whether the judgment of any other member of the Senate went farther on the subjects with which that Committee has to deal. "It is not more money we need," he wrote once, when the question of an elastic currency was under discussion, "it is more sense about money,"[1] and that remark illustrates the way in which he always approached the subject.

In concluding the first long speech he ever made in the Senate, he thus expressed his modest judgment of his own attainments:

> I have ventured to make these observations with great diffidence in the presence and hearing of Senators who, from study and long observation and experience, are so much better qualified to discuss this subject than I am. I do not pretend to be a financier, but I have thought that the suggestions which I have tried to make, some of them at least, might claim the merit of being in accordance with common sense; and, if so, what I have said will not be an entirely unworthy contribution to this discussion.

[1] Letter to John H. Flagg, August, 1903.

This was his habit—to appeal to the every-day experience of the average man. He made no pretence to expert knowledge. So far as he was able, he applied the ordinary rules of private business to the consideration of public affairs. He had always been a "sound-money" man, and it happened that his first serious discussion of an important measure helped to fix his place in the Senate as a pillar of conservative finance.

In the first session of the Forty-sixth Congress, in 1880, Fernando Wood, from the Committee on Ways and Means, of which he was Chairman, had reported to the House a bill "To facilitate the refunding of the national debt." As originally reported, it provided that, in lieu of the bonds authorized by the refunding act of July 14, 1870, bearing 5, 4½, and 4 per cent. interest, bonds bearing interest at the rate of 3½ per cent., to the amount of $500,000,000, redeemable at the pleasure of the United States, and also Treasury notes in the amount of $200,000,000, bearing interest at the rate of 3½ per cent., redeemable at the pleasure of the United States after two years, and payable in ten years, be issued.

The Secretary of the Treasury was authorized to issue any of these bonds or notes for any of the bonds of the United States as they became redeemable, par for par, the 3½ bonds to be the only bonds receivable as security for national bank circulation.

The bill as introduced and reported was in harmony with the recommendations made by Secretary Sherman in his annual report, and if it had been passed in that form it would have saved the United States great sums of money, and would have measurably strengthened the public credit. But the Democratic House tore the bill to pieces. All sorts of queer and erratic

amendments were offered, and the Ways and Means Committee acquiesced in so many of them, that, in the judgment of the Secretary of the Treasury, the execution of the law, had it been passed, would have been out of the question. The rate of interest was reduced to 3 per cent., and a provision was made that no bonds should be taken as security for bank circulation, or government deposits, except the 3 per cent. bonds thus provided. The bill, distorted, passed the House on January 19, 1881. The Senate Committee on Finance amended it so as to eliminate the more objectionable features, restoring the rate of interest to $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The bill was taken up in the Senate on February 15th. It was important that some sensible legislation should be had. In a little more than sixty days from that time, bonds bearing interest at 5 per cent., to the amount of $469,651,050, would become payable at the option of the Government. On the thirtieth of June two other loans, each bearing 6 per cent., the first for $145,786,500, the second for $57,787,250, would also mature, at the option of the Government. This extravagant rate of interest might have been exchanged for the then reasonable rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., if the impossible elements of Congress had been willing to listen to reason. It was felt by the masters of finance that a bond of a lower rate than $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. could not be floated under conditions then existing, but the radicals in the Senate and in the House insisted that the rate should be at least as low as 3 per cent. It was in the days of fanatical opposition to the national banks, many of which were approaching the end of the twenty years' period for which they were originally chartered, and nothing was regarded as unreasonable which would compel

the banks to accept a low rate of interest for the bonds required to be deposited for circulation. Twenty years later, it was found possible to float over $600,000,000 of 2 per cent. consols, and Mr. Platt was among those who favored that rate of interest in 1900. But that low rate of interest could not have been obtained had it not been for artificial devices, the wisdom of resorting to which is now seriously in question.

In speaking of the funding bill of February 17, 1881, Mr. Platt began by quoting the homely phrase, "It is better to be safe than to be sorry." He asked:

> What is a fair rate of interest? It is certainly not the highest rate which the lender would take if he could get it. It may not be the lowest rate at which the Government can induce the lender to part with his money. What is a fair rate of interest, if we consider only this day and this hour, may be a very unfair rate of interest before the five years' option shall expire, or before the twenty years shall have expired when these bonds mature. If it be found to be an unfair rate of interest, the result will be that these bonds will go below par, a disaster I think which would more than overbalance all the benefits to be derived from the saving which the Government might make in the difference between $3\frac{1}{2}$ and 3 per cent. I believe that rate to be fairest and wisest and best which, during the whole period that these bonds are to remain outstanding, will maintain them at or substantially at par, always excepting times of panic, against which we can not provide, and the coming of which we can not certainly foretell.

He then asked a question which reads somewhat strangely in view of the ease with which the $200,000,000 Spanish War loan was floated in 1898 at three per cent., and $730,000,000 in consols and Panama bonds have been floated since 1900:

Does any one who does not listen to the interested speculators of Wall Street, and whose eyes are not blinded with the glamour of stock speculation, believe that a three per cent. bond or a three and one quarter per cent. bond is to remain at par in this country during the next five, ten, or twenty years? I think I may safely assume that the answer to that question must be in the negative; and I suggest to those who desire to win a cheap glory for this Government in placing this bond at a lower rate of interest than any other government has ever been able to place its bonds, to consider the probability of these bonds at a three per cent. interest being at 90 or 85, and to ask themselves whether the whole country will not then point to the unwisdom of their position of to-day.

He could not tolerate the inference that, because the banks were largely to take the bonds, it was of no consequence at how low a rate of interest Congress could compel the banks to accept the bonds and be satisfied:

I have no interest in national banks; I do not own a dollar of stock in a bank, and therefore I may say that I have no patience with the sentiment abroad in this country which cries "Down with the national banks!" We should not have a country to-day if the banking system had not been adopted and put in operation; we should not have prosperous business to-day; we should not have good times to-day, if it had not been for that wise system of banking—the wisest and the best in my judgment that exists on the face of the earth—a system which furnishes absolute security to the bill holder. No man in this broad land ever lost one dollar upon the bills of a national bank, and no man ever will.

He did not believe that, even at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest, the bonds then held by national banks would be fully replaced by new bonds, and he suggested that any

Senator put the question to "his conservative banking friend, as every Senator has such a friend in whom he places implicit confidence." He believed that there must be a sudden and violent contraction of the national bank circulation:

> If it were not for that fact I should regard the issue of Treasury notes as a dangerous measure, in that it would inflate suddenly the currency of the country, and then as suddenly, when interest had accumulated upon them, contract it again. It will be my hope that to some degree they may supply the place made by the retirement of the national bank circulation under this act.

He would rather pay four per cent. than three per cent. and he believed that with the exception of the men in Wall Street who, for purposes of speculation, were running government bonds up beyond their intrinsic value, the business men of the country would prefer that the rate should be four per cent. rather than less than three and a half per cent.:

> This Government, if the bond is really worth more than par at three and a half per cent., will reap its advantage in the increased premium; the Government will lose nothing; and it will thus prevent a loss falling eventually upon that class of people who are least able to bear it, to a great extent, and whom we least desire should bear the loss, if any there is to be.
>
> But the rate of interest that is to be paid in business transactions during the next five, ten, or twenty years, is to be largely affected by the rate of interest which the Government places upon this loan. I know that the government rate of interest is not the only thing which influences the business rate of interest; but it does influence it; it does have its effect upon it. When you reduce the government interest, there follows or goes along with it a reduction in the

business rate of interest. The business rate of interest is a most important factor in the future prosperity of this country. If it be too low there is danger in it as surely as if it be too high. If the rate of interest be too high, what is the result? It eats up capital, it eats up the capital invested in all business enterprises, and bankruptcy follows, hard times follow. And what if it be too low? The capitalists seek other avenues for investment, they are tempted into speculative enterprises, and they will do what they are doing to-day—put their money at risk for the sake of obtaining a higher rate of interest than the current rate. What is the result of that? Overspeculation, overtrading, followed by panic, by depression, by hard times. What this country needs, what the business of the country needs, is a stable, fair rate of interest, one which shall neither be too high nor too low; and I think in fixing the rate of this government loan we should have in view the influence that the government rate of interest is to have upon the business rate of interest.

Mr. President, all these considerations lead me to hope that the recommendation of the Committee will be adopted; that we shall neither make the rate 3 per cent., nor $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., nor shall we change the recommendation of the Committee by saying at a rate not exceeding $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. I think there is great force in the fact that when you are dealing with the men of Wall Street, as you must to a certain extent deal with them in placing this loan, it is not wise to say to them: "We will sell our bonds at 3 per cent. if you will take them; if not, we will let you have them at $3\frac{1}{2}$." I believe that the legislative branch of the Government should fix a rate at which it knows, as well as it can be assured of anything, that the loan will be placed, and placed quickly, and that rate should be certain, not left to the discretion of the Secretary of the Treasury.

In spite of the attitude of the administration and the arguments of some of the most influential Demo-

cratic Senators, among them Mr. Bayard, Chairman of the Finance Committee, the Senate, after long debate, disagreed to the amendments of the Committee and passed the bill substantially as it came from the House. Had the bill become a law in this form, it would have imperilled the national banking system, and the fear of this result caused a serious flurry in the money market during the last week in February, while the country was awaiting the action of the President. On the 3d of March the President returned the bill with his veto. "Under Section 5 of the bill," he said:

> It is obvious that no additional banks will hereafter be organized except possibly in a few cities or localities where the prevailing rates of interest in ordinary business are extremely low. No new banks can be organized and no increase of the capital of existing banks can be obtained, except by the purchase and deposit of 3 per cent. bonds. No other bonds of the United States can be used for the purpose. The one thousand millions of other bonds recently issued by the United States, and bearing a higher interest than 3 per cent., and therefore a better security for the bill holders, cannot, after the first of July next, be received as security for bank circulation. This is a radical change in the banking law. It takes from the banks the right they heretofore had under the law to purchase and deposit as security for the circulation any of the bonds issued by the United States, and deprives the bill holder of the best security which the banks are able to give, by requiring them to deposit bonds having the least value of any bonds issued by the Government.

Two years later, on February 10, 1883, during the second session of the Forty-seventh Congress, during the debate on a bill reducing internal-revenue duties,

Mr. Platt made a proposition to abolish the tax on national-bank circulation, thus bringing down on his head the reproaches of Mr. Sherman and Mr. Morrill, then at the head of the Finance Committee. The bill, which became a law on March 3, 1883, described, among other taxes to be abolished, the tax on bank checks, bank capital, and bank deposits. During its consideration in the Senate, Mr. Platt moved to amend, by inserting the words:

"And on bank circulation, as provided in the third clause of Section 3408 of the Revised Statutes of the United States."

In advocating this amendment, he said:

If we are to remove all the internal-revenue taxes except the tax on whiskey and a portion of the tax on tobacco, I can see no reason why the tax should be left upon the circulation of banks. I can see no reason why the tax should be removed from bank deposits and bank capital, and be left upon bank circulation. There are, to my mind, many reasons why, if a discrimination is to be made, the tax upon circulation should be repealed, and not upon deposits; and I will state them very briefly:

The deposit tax is the tax easiest paid by the banks. The repeal of the tax on deposits will relieve the banks which least need relief. The repeal of the tax upon circulation will relieve the banks which most need relief. Of course the city banks are the great deposit banks of the country; they have deposits many times in excess of their capital, and they are banks of small circulation. When you go into the country, the conditions are reversed. The country banks are banks of small deposits and of large circulation. . . . If there is to be any tax left on banks it should be the tax on deposits, and the tax on circulation should be repealed for the benefit of the country banks, the weak banks, the conservative banks, the banks that never

indulge in or countenance speculation, and are conducted for the benefit of the people and the business interests of the communities where they are located.

Mr. Sherman denounced this proposition as monstrous, and Mr. Morrill expressed regret that the subject had been introduced. No vote was taken on the amendment, and nothing more was ever heard of it. The tax on circulation remained at one per cent. until the passage of the law of 1900, which reduced the tax to one-half per cent., when circulation is secured by two per cent. consols. Recent proposals to abolish altogether the tax on circulation secured by two per cents. have not been denounced as "monstrous."

CHAPTER XIV

THE FREE-SILVER DELUSION

A Genuine Bimetallist—Opposes Coin Certificates in 1888—The Sherman Law of 1890—Opponent of Free Silver—Objects to Hasty Repeal—Retaliation against Great Britain.

WHEN Platt became a Senator, free silver was a dormant issue. The Greenback heresy had seen its day, and its devotees had shifted their allegiance to the "dollar of the Fathers" as the next worst thing. The Democratic party, from force of habit, had accepted the new doctrine, and they were reinforced by Republicans from silver-mining States, while other Republicans weakly wavered. The issue had been joined in Congress, resulting in a compromise upon the so-called Bland-Allison Silver Act of 1878, which was as far from satisfying the advocates of free-silver coinage as the friends of a stable medium of exchange, but which for a time served as a makeshift to keep the silver question out of Congress except for sporadic outbursts of debate.[1] Though the question was kept out of Congress, the friends of silver were not idle. After the election of Cleveland in 1884, they made a vigorous demonstration, which was held in check only by the President's firm stand against the majority of his own

[1] The Democratic House had passed a straight free-coinage bill under suspension of the rules by a vote of 163 to 34. The measure was modified by the Senate, which had a Republican majority.

party, and which so impressed itself upon the politics of the day, that when the Republicans returned to power in 1888 they found it necessary to consider further legislation which, stopping short of free coinage, should mollify prevailing sentiment by providing for a larger use of silver.

Platt had been a sturdy antagonist of the Greenback propaganda. He was opposed not only to inflation but to the greenback in itself, and up to the end he seldom touched upon the currency in any form without uttering a note of warning against that survival of the operation of Civil War finance. He was just as sturdy an opponent of free silver at the ratio of 16 to 1, but he had no prejudice against silver as a medium of exchange. He was an international bimetallist, and so he always remained. With him bimetallism was not a political evasion, it was a serious economic proposition. He believed there was a place for both silver and gold in the currency of the world, if the great commercial nations would agree, and he believed that the danger of silver coinage would be greatly mitigated if the coin itself were used in the currency instead of silver certificates issued by the Government. Holding these views, it fell to his lot to be of material service in bringing hostile forces together and so preventing the enactment of a free-coinage law, when that peril was imminent in 1890.

He first declared his position in the Senate on the silver question in the course of a debate during the first session of the Fiftieth Congress in 1888 on an amendment offered by Stewart of Nevada to a bill "To provide for the purchase of United States bonds by the Secretary of the Treasury." Stewart proposed to authorize the issue of coin certificates at United

States mints and assay offices in return for deposits of gold and silver bullion, the price of silver bullion to be stated by the Secretary of the Treasury on the first and fifteenth of each calendar month, but not to exceed $1 for 412½ grains of silver, nine-tenths fine. In the opinion of Mr. Platt this proposition reeked with financial heresy, and he spoke with force and earnestness against it. The decline in the price of silver, after the enactment of the Bland-Allison act, had been responsible largely for the continued agitation of the silver question, and the advocates of the pending amendment insisted that its enactment would put silver at par. Mr. Platt reminded them that silver had declined, as all other things declined, because there had been an over-production of it in the world—more than was required for coinage and other uses, including manufacturing and the arts:

Why should the adoption of the proposed measure put silver at par? Because it will furnish a customer for all the silver that can be mined in the whole world. And what will be the effect of that? Simply that mining will be more profitable, will attract new capital, will enlist new enterprise, and the more it is produced the more the Government must take of it and issue the coin certificates for it, and this not only in the United States, but throughout the world. There is nothing to prevent the bringing of silver to this country, and there is nothing to prevent any foreigner, anybody on the whole face of the wide globe, from bringing all his surplus silver to the Treasury of the United States and taking the coin certificates of this Government for it.

If this bill passes, the Senator from Nevada may well say there will be prosperity. There will, but it will be the prosperity which comes with inflation, to be followed at last by worse adversity. The history of the world has

shown that when a government begins, upon the demand for more money, to increase its paper money, there is no end of that increase and inflation except absolute bankruptcy and financial ruin.

The Stewart amendment was absorbed in an amendment offered by Mr. Beck, of Kentucky, substituting coin certificates for the existing gold and silver certificates. The Beck amendment was adopted by a vote of 38 to 13 and Mr. Platt was enrolled with the small minority. The bill, thus amended, passed the Senate on April 5, 1888, without division. It never became a law but the popular call for free coinage continued. It became so strong that at the beginning of the new administration in 1889, Secretary Windom, with the approval of President Harrison, submitted to Congress, in his first annual report, his plan for increasing the use of silver in circulation. This plan provided that the Treasury Department should purchase silver bullion every month to a limited extent, paying therefor Treasury notes receivable for government dues, and payable on demand in gold, or in silver bullion at the current market rate, at the time of payment, and that the purchase of silver bullion and the compulsory coinage of silver dollars under the Act of 1878 should close. On the twenty-eighth of January, 1890, Senator Morrill, Chairman of the Finance Committee, introduced a bill prepared by the Secretary of the Treasury and embodying his views. The bill was reported favorably by the Finance Committee with certain amendments. Its important section was the first, which authorized the Secretary of the Treasury to purchase $4,500,000 worth of silver bullion each month and to issue in payment therefor Treasury notes receivable for customs and all public

dues, and redeemable on demand in lawful money of the United States; when so redeemed to be cancelled. A similar bill had been passed by the House, the principal difference being that under the House bill the notes to be issued were full legal tender, and the Secretary of the Treasury was authorized to redeem them in gold coin or silver bullion at the market rate.

The Senate considered these measures at intervals for over three months in a notable debate, into which entered every question connected with the financial operations of the Government since the war.

The debate was carried on largely by the friends of free silver, who declaimed at great length of the iniquity of the "Crime of '73"; for the proposal of the Finance Committee and the bill passed by the House were a long way from meeting their demands. The opponents of free silver contented themselves, as a rule, with replying to the arguments advanced, and with taking up, point by point, questions as they arose during the discussion. Mr. Platt had little to say except to interpolate an occasional query. Toward the end of the debate, on June 13, 1890, he interrupted a speech of Mr. Stewart with the following comment:

> Does the Senator believe—and he has paid great attention to this subject, and his opinion is entitled to great weight—that if the maximum amount now provided by law to be coined into silver dollars were to be coined, the result of that would be to restore the equivalency in value between the gold and silver dollar? Because if he does and is correct in his supposition, I confess that it seems to me that is a ground upon which we might all come together. . . .
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> If the Senator will permit me one other word, some of us have this difficulty: We feel that if we use the two metals

as money—and we feel that we ought to do it—the material of which a dollar is composed in each metal ought to be the same. I do not suppose that in 1878, if it had been an original proposition, anybody would have thought of coining a silver dollar of which the material was not of the same commercial value as the material in the gold dollar; but it was thought that a great wrong had been done, that silver had been demonetized when the material of which the dollar was composed was worth as much as the gold dollar, and that wrong ought to be righted, and that we ought to take the same ratio although the value of the silver had depreciated; and that, I understand, was the ground upon which the bill of 1878 was passed.

Now, if there is any way in which we can get back so as to have the material of which one dollar is composed of the same value of which the other dollar is composed, then we should all get back upon a common platform.

Four days later, on June 17th, an amendment proposed by Senator Plumb, striking out the first section of the bill and inserting in its place an unqualified provision for the free coinage of silver at 16 to 1, was adopted by a vote of 43 to 24, the favoring votes coming from the Democratic side of the chamber, and from Republican Senators of silver-producing States.

The ultimate result was the Sherman Silver act. Mr. Sherman was at the head of the Conference Committee for the Senate and Mr. Conger of Iowa for the House. It took nearly three weeks for the Conference Committee to approach a reconciliation of the wide differences between the two sides, and Senator Platt had more to do than almost any other man in bringing the free silver Senators to accept a compromise. When the report was finally made, on July 7th, Senator Harris of Tennessee, and Representative Bland of Missouri, the Democratic free silver members of the

conference, refused to sign it. The bill as finally passed provided for the purchase of 4,500,000 ounces of silver bullion per month, instead of $4,500,000, a change, which, owing to the subsequent fall in the price of silver, reduced the amount to be purchased. It also contained an important new clause, declaring the purpose of the Government to maintain the parity of the metals.

Mr. Sherman, from whom the act took its name, although he was not primarily responsible for it, declared a few years later that he was ready to repeal it the day it became a law, if repeal could have been had without substituting in its place absolute free coinage. Mr. Platt, while no more nearly satisfied with the act than others, was never carried away with the clamor against it which began almost immediately, grew in volume after the election of Cleveland in 1892, and continued unabated until after the repeal of the purchasing clause in the following autumn. Having voted for the law as a compromise, and worked for it to avoid the evil of free coinage, which was threatening, and which would surely have carried in the House after passing the Senate, had it not been for the superb courage of Speaker Reed, he was never ready to denounce it as an unquestioned evil in itself, although with other Republican Senators in 1893, he upheld the hands of President Cleveland in voting for the repeal.

During the winter of 1892–93, succeeding the second election of President Cleveland, Eastern Democratic and Mugwump newspapers and periodicals, unwilling to acknowledge the threat of tariff revision to be responsible for the then impending financial disturbance, entered upon a crusade for the repeal of the Sherman

law, demanding that the Congress then in session enter at once upon that imperative task, and ignoring the obvious fact that no legislation of such importance could be agreed upon by a Republican Senate and a Democratic House in the few weeks remaining before the fourth of March, when a single free silver Senator, with stout lungs, was physically capable of preventing any legislation whatever. One of those who joined in the cry was Henry C. Bowen, editor of the New York *Independent*, who sent to his old friend, Mr. Platt, a galley proof of an editorial entitled "Repeal the Silver Law" which was going to appear in his publication. Mr. Platt wrote him a letter of mild reproof, which contained food for thought:

A galley proof of the article in *The Independent* of January fifth, entitled "Repeal the Silver Law," has been sent me. I suppose it reflects your views as well as the views of the paper.

In my opinion, however, some things ought to be considered, which do not seem to have attracted the attention of people who are so earnestly urging the repeal of that law.

First. By means of it the country has been furnished with a circulation amounting to practically $4,500,000 a month since August, 1890. That this addition has not been more than was needed is shown conclusively, I think, by the fact that it has not resulted in an increase of prices, and therefore is not in any sense inflation. I believe, moreover, that the prosperity of the country has been full as much due to this increase of currency—which somewhat keeps pace with our increase of population and business—as to our tariff legislation or any other thing. Without it we should have had relative contraction, and, I think, more or less financial distress. And now when the Treasury is running on a somewhat narrow margin, and every little scare operates to make a squeeze in money,

can we afford to cut off this circulation without putting something in its place?

I see your article suggests that this should be done. To that I reply that the substitution of any other form of circulation is a practical impossibility. Three methods are spoken of:

First,—the increase of national bank circulation, which is absolutely hopeless. New York does not realize the temper of the country, which is much more likely in the next administration to prohibit the issue of currency by national banks than to increase it. Of course, I regret this temper. But the increased issue of national bank circulation cannot, in my judgment, get the vote of one third of the Senate or House.

Second,—a return to the "Bland" act. I would rather buy four and a half million ounces of silver a month, and issue treasury notes to the exact amount of purchase, than to buy two millions a month and coin it into three millions, and issue silver certificates to the amount of three millions for the purchase of two.

Third,—the repeal of the tax on State bank circulation, which is the only probable method of continuing the increase of currency, if the so-called Sherman law should be repealed. I am convinced that the Democratic party, with Mr. Cleveland at its head, does intend to do this, if it can repeal the present law; and I would rather continue the Sherman law than resort to that.

Have you thought of the probable effect of repealing or suspending the Sherman law, upon the price of silver, and if it should result in a further serious fall whether that would not precipitate a premium on gold quicker than a further continuance of silver purchases? The present law makes a market for more than one third of the world's product of silver. Suppose that demand to be withdrawn, and that silver should fall from its price of about 67 cents on the dollar of gold to, say, 50 cents on the dollar, how long would it be before the Treasury notes which have

been issued since August, 1890, payable in "coin," would be presented at the Treasury for redemption? The Treasury would feel bound to pay them in gold as long as it could, and how long could it?

The silver certificates issued upon the coined dollars are redeemable only in silver by law. But would they continue to circulate at par with a gold dollar, if silver should fall to 50 cents on the dollar? In the downward course of silver a point would be reached where gold would go to a premium. It might not be at 50 cents on the dollar; but there is a point somewhere in the downward price of silver when the silver certificates and the silver dollar would not pass for the equal of the gold dollar, and then gold would be immediately at a premium.

There is but one answer to this, and that is that the situation is not to be ultimately relieved by a further continuance of silver purchases. But I have thought that perhaps the production of silver was now being reduced by the low price, and that except for the fact that the Sherman law might be repealed in the near future, silver would be likely to advance to a price where the entire amount purchased under that law would be equal to all the certificates that have been issued.

The problem is one of great difficulty. I believe the evil day can be longer postponed by continuing the purchase of silver than by immediate cessation, without the possibility of putting into circulation a similar amount of currency in the place of that now being issued.

Finally. We are still bound until next May in good faith to try to bring about an international agreement for the enlarged use of silver, or for an international coinage arrangement; and it would be discreditable to a nation that has solicited the conference to attempt to bulldoze the conference by refusing to use silver at all. My own judgment is that it is better to wait till that conference reassembles next May, and then if we cannot get some international agreement for the enlarged use of silver or for an

international coinage agreement, to tell the conference that the United States would be compelled in self-defence to change its policy with regard to its use.

My view, too, is that when that change is made, it should be a gradual cessation of purchase rather than a total suspension.

These expressions of mine are purely tentative. I do not know how I should vote on a given bill, which might come up for action. But it seems strange to me that people who assume such financial wisdom should apparently have never thought of these things.

In spite of obvious reasons for letting the currency alone during the short session, the unthinking demand persisted, inspired chiefly by doctrinaires with heads in the clouds, profoundly oblivious to parliamentary possibilities. Politicians, to ingratiate themselves with the newspapers, feigned acquiescence in the demand. David B. Hill, of New York, introduced a bill to repeal the purchasing clause of the Sherman act, and on February 6, 1893, less than a month before Congress must come to an end, he moved to take it up for consideration. It was a political play, and every Senator knew it, but, confronted with the issue, most of the gold standard Republicans, for the sake of the record, felt compelled to vote in the affirmative. Mr. Platt could not bring himself to do this, but joined the free silver Republicans and the Democrats in defeating the motion. To his friend John Flagg he wrote:

I fear that I displeased my Connecticut friends to-day in not voting to take up the silver question, but the thing was so plainly and manifestly a mere fencing for political advantage, that I was sick of the whole matter. Every Senator who voted to take it up knew there was not the slightest opportunity to get it to a vote, and I did not

propose to vote to embarrass the business of the session. I am not quite sure that I am in favor of a repeal of the Sherman law anyway. I should vote against it at this session, but possibly next session I should vote for it. I don't think it is just fair to nations that we have asked to take part in the conference to change the situation while the conference continues. I think it would have an unfavorable effect upon the conference, and what I sincerely desire is an international agreement for the free coinage of silver. I confess I don't know what is going to happen if we can't get it. I think to discontinue the use of silver as money absolutely, would send it down to a point where we would be quite as likely to get on to a silver basis as we shall by continuing the law.

The pressure continued, the expected financial panic arrived, President Cleveland called Congress in special session to repeal the purchasing clause of the Sherman law, and after many dreary weeks of debate, the clause was repealed. Mr. Platt and the majority of Republican Senators voted for the repeal, in company with a few Democrats, but it has never yet been demonstrated that the repeal of the act materially relieved the financial distress which continued until a succession of Republican victories had at last assured the great industrial interests of an end to experimental legislation.

The next opportunity which Mr. Platt accepted to discuss the silver question was during the debate on the Wilson-Gorman Tariff bill in the spring of 1894. Mr. Lodge, at that time one of the youngest members of the Senate, had introduced the following amendment to the bill:

Except that when not in contravention of any existing treaty, any article made dutiable in the following sections

shall, if it is the product or manufacture of Great Britain or of any of the colonies of Great Britain, pay a duty double that herein imposed; and any article upon the free list in the preceding section shall, if the product or manufacture of Great Britain or of any of the colonies of Great Britain, pay a duty of 35% ad valorem; and such additional and discriminating duties shall remain in force until Great Britain shall assent to, and take part in, an international agreement with the United States for the coinage and use of silver and shall close whenever Great Britain shall assent to, and take part in, such international agreement for the coinage of silver.

This proposed amendment, which attracted much attention at the time, was in line with the professions of the Republican party as declared in its platforms, and was intended to demonstrate the sincerity of the demand for an international agreement, which hitherto had been rendered ineffectual through the immobility of British statesmanship.

Mr. Platt, as has been said, was a constant advocate of bimetallism under an international agreement, and on May 2, 1894, he spoke in support of the Lodge amendment:

I believe myself to be and claim to be a bimetallist. I know that there is a difference in the definition of that word. I know that my friends who are in favor of the free coinage of silver by the United States alone, do not admit that any one is a bimetallist unless he agrees with them and supports the free coinage of silver by the United States alone. I am a bimetallist and honestly so in the sense that I desire, if it be possible with safety to the country, that we shall have free coinage of silver. If that be not possible I desire to use all the silver that we may safely use in this country as a legal-tender money.

The difference between myself and those who insist

upon free coinage by the United States alone is that they believe it would be better for the United States acting independently to adopt the free coinage and use of silver. I believe that that would be more disastrous to the United States than to pursue our present policy of keeping the silver which we have in use and waiting until such time as the world will engage in the free coinage of silver or the limited use of silver.

I recognize the fact that all that stands in the way to-day of the free coinage of silver by the commercial nations of the world at a ratio of 16 to 1 or $15\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 is the attitude of Great Britain, and I think that the passage of this amendment, passed as it ought to be by both sides of the chamber, would be an admonition and a voice which Great Britain could not refuse to hear.

I agree to a certain extent with those whom I may call my silver friends, that the scarcity of gold in the world for many purposes has been productive of great disaster, has been to a large extent responsible for falling prices and unremunerative business. Perhaps I would disagree with them as to the extent to which that cause has operated. I have no doubt I should disagree with them in supposing that other causes were potent in the fall of prices and the unremunerative character of business; but that the appreciation of gold and its ever-increasing scarcity for money uses have to a great extent destroyed values and made business unprofitable I do agree. That Great Britain stands directly in the path of the use of silver and stands there almost alone, I think is unquestionable. Therefore, I desire by the passage of this amendment that we may do something which will convince England that it is no longer to her interest to stand in the position of the usurious creditor of the world, something which may open her eyes to the fact that there is for her a path of greatness and prosperity aside from the mere lending of money and taking the interest in gold, and cheapening the prices of these commodities and things which she desires to buy and must buy.

CHAPTER XV

PAPER MONEY

Continued Agitation for Free Silver—Opposes Fictitious "Seigniorage" in 1895—Criticism of the Greenbacks—For Sound Money in 1896.

OF course, nobody of political intelligence expected that the repeal of the purchasing clause of the Sherman act would settle the silver question. The controversy was bound to persist until it had furnished the compelling issue in a campaign for the Presidency, and until, through an unforeseen increase in the production of gold, with a consequent expansion of the circulating medium, it became merely an academic dispute. The friends of silver would not acknowledge defeat, nor could they rest. They tantalized jaded industries with one and another alluring bait, seeking fatuously to tease their way to recognition. It was only a little more than a year after the repeal, at a time when no significant financial legislation by any chance could be enacted, that the Democratic majority of the Senate Finance Committee reported a bill with no other apparent purpose than to play for political position. The bill as originally introduced was to provide "for the issue of bonds, the coinage of silver, and for other purposes." Under the merciless pruning of the Finance Committee it was reduced to a single paragraph, which meant in simple English that any owner of silver bullion,

without limit of quantity, might sell it to the United States at its market price, receiving for it silver dollars and certificates issued upon the silver dollars, and that the United States should make a profit of the difference between the market value and the coinage of the silver which it purchased—a fictitious "seigniorage." The bill was defended by its advocates, but there was practically no argument in opposition, until Mr. Platt, on February 19, 1895, took the floor. He declared that of all the measures suggested to Congress for a larger use of silver, this was the most indefensible, and that "of all the foolish, illogical, impracticable methods for the use of silver" none had ever equalled it. He declared, moreover, that there was not a Senator in the chamber who really wanted the bill to become a law. He derided the so-called "seigniorage" in the bill. The provision by which the Government of the United States was to pay for the silver delivered to it, and that moment have it worth twice as much as it was in the hands of the seller, was not a seigniorage:

> No government in the world has ever, to my knowledge, attempted the making of money out of the business of coining money except the Government of the United States. It would not be tolerated, I think, anywhere else.

If the bill should pass, he said the very pleasing fiction that by thus dealing with silver bullion the Government was making one hundred per cent. profit at the present price of silver would disappear:

> It will prove not to have been a profit at all. If the time should ever come when, by reason of the extent of its purchases of silver, gold and silver should part company as to value, and the gold dollar should become more valuable in purchasing and debt-paying power than the silver dollar,

the moment that occurs, if it does occur, then it will be seen that all this supposed advantage of one hundred per cent. profit in the purchase of silver was not a profit after all; and the loss will fall not upon the Government, not upon the man who sold the silver to the Government, but upon the man who holds the coins which the Government issues in the purchase of the silver, or which it coined after having paid for the silver and used it, for other purposes.

He acknowledged that he was a bimetallist and expressed his belief that, if we could have an international agreement among the commercial nations, the world could use as money all the silver produced, without in any way impairing the value of the silver money:

I have not lost hope of international bimetallism. I think we may be very much encouraged at the present time to hope that international bimetallism is a thing of the not very remote future.

If it should be shown that England and Germany utterly and absolutely for all time refused to engage with the United States in an international agreement for the enlarged use of silver, he would be willing, and would advocate, that the United States join with such commercial nations as were willing to engage in an international monetary conference for that purpose.

The most significant passage of the speech was that in which he impressed upon his hearers a few wholesome truths about the currency system of the United States, and outlined what, in his opinion, would be genuine currency reform. His conclusions are as valid now as then:

I believe the vice of our whole financial situation lies in our paper currency. . . . I regard it as one of the most

unfortunate epochs in the history of the United States when under a supposed and a real necessity we departed from the ancient methods and practices and customs of the Government to simply coin the metals, silver and gold, and resorted to a paper currency. No country ever did it, whether the paper was redeemable or irredeemable, that did not suffer for it in the end.

When we resorted to the greenback I venture to say that there were not ten public men in the United States who claimed that it was a sound financial measure. The men who advocated it, the men who insisted upon it, resorted to it upon the plea of necessity only, acknowledging that it was unsound finance, promising that when the war should be over and our great expenses arising from the war should no longer have to be met, greenbacks would be retired from circulation, never for a moment admitting or supposing that they could pass into our financial system; but they have been incorporated in our system.

In addition to that amount of paper money, the greenbacks, we have about $480,000,000 of silver paper. We have in this country, then, about $875,000,000 of paper money. That money is responsible for the growth of paternalism in this country. The people from coming to believe that it was not sound finance, that the only function of government with regard to money was to coin gold and silver, placing the government stamp upon the metal and delivering it to the person who should bring it to the mint, and regulating the value of it, have come now to believe that in some way or other it is the function of government to furnish money to the people, to believe that it is one of the functions of government to make every man's business as profitable as the man himself shall desire it to be. It is the inherent vice of government paper money that the people look to the government to furnish them with money and to regulate the money of the government so that they can be prosperous in their business. . . .

The whole country has become demoralized with this idea that the Government may properly and wisely issue paper money, and regulate not alone the value of money, but the value and conduct of all business throughout the country thereby. There never was a more fatal governmental heresy than that national benefit is to be derived from issues of governmental paper. . . . Any nation that issues its promise-to-pay as money has embarked on a road where it is almost impossible to turn about, the end of which is disaster and financial distress and ruin.

My greatest objection to the use of silver is in the issuing of paper money upon it. There is where the danger lies. We can maintain at a parity with gold coin all the silver coin at a ratio of 16 to 1 which the people will use as coin, but I firmly believe that we cannot maintain at a parity with gold all the silver upon which we can issue paper money in this country. . . . One thing is true, and that is that if there are two kinds of money the bullion value of which differs materially the cheaper kind will drive out the more valuable kind if it becomes sufficiently redundant. That is denied by no one. If we continue the purchase of silver, the bullion of which has only a gold value of fifty cents to the dollar, and continue putting out paper upon it without limitation, we shall finally arrive at that point where the cheaper money will drive out the more valuable money and where gold will go to a premium. . . . You can use two metals of different bullion value together to a certain extent. If the United States Government should stamp 412½ grains of copper as a dollar, receive it for government dues, make it a legal tender, and put no more of it in circulation than was fairly required for the payment of government dues, and to meet perhaps the views of some few people who believe that the stamp of the Government is all that is needed, it could carry copper dollars of 412½ grains to a certain extent just as well as it can silver dollars of 412½ grains, when the bullion in the dollar is only worth half as much as the gold dollar. But, if you kept that

process up, and issued those copper dollars until they were vastly in excess of what was required to be used for the payment of the government dues, and in excess of the amount used by those who believed that the Government stamp will carry anything as a dollar, when the amount exceeded those requirements, then those dollars would become valuable only as copper. So, if by this system of issuing paper upon silver you get into circulation more silver than is required for the use of payments to be made to the Government, and up to a point where a majority believe that there is too much of it, then the silver which the paper represents will be valuable as silver only. . . .

The trouble is that the Government has gone into the banking business, and no financial measure which does not look to the retirement of the Government from the banking business is going to be of anything but temporary avail. When we settle this question, we must settle it upon sound financial principles. That is our trouble now. With $875,000,000 of paper money out, $346,000,000 of which is directly redeemable, if not by law, by our customs, in gold, and $155,000,000 more of what are called "Sherman-purchase-act notes" which have also been treated as being redeemable in gold, we have in round numbers nearly $500,000,000 of paper money to be redeemed in gold, and in addition to that are the national bank notes, which may come in for gold redemption. I do not speak of that, however, because I am speaking of the absolute government paper money. What does that involve, Mr. President? It involves our keeping a fund of gold in the United States Treasury all the while lying idle, until demand may be made upon the Treasury for redemption. It involves our keeping sufficient gold there so that every one will be satisfied that there can be redemption under all circumstances.

We have by law put it out of our power to get a dollar of gold into the Treasury except by borrowing it. Then comes the necessity of meeting a demand for gold in our

foreign payments, and so the gold is gradually or rapidly depleted from the Treasury, when we fill it up, as it were, with a sufficient reserve fund. This thing is to go on forever. So long as our present system of paper money continues there is no relief from it. . . .

If we had not departed from the old system of coining gold and silver for the persons who brought it to the mint and in paying our own obligations in coin, or in the checks and bills of exchange which make up so large a proportion of the payments of this country, we should have no trouble. All this idea that the people have a right to depend upon the Government through its money transactions and its issue of paper money to regulate their affairs to their liking would not be present, and this paternalism, socialism, and populism, latent or rampant, would never have got such a foothold in this country if it had not been encouraged by the false financial system of paper money which we have inaugurated.

I know that in the minds of a great many people I am talking financial heresy. I remember when I first came into the Senate a message was received from the President in favor of the continued retirement of greenbacks, and I saw the remarkable spectacle of the Secretary of the Treasury recommending that there should be no further retirement of greenbacks.

The difficulty with this question is to get rid of our paper money without disturbing the financial condition of the country. That is a serious question. It requires the attention and study of the best, the most careful, and most thoughtful financiers; but that we ought to do it in such a way and as rapidly as possible, without disturbing the financial conditions and dealing a serious blow to business, I have not the least doubt.

This road of Government paper issues can lead only to disaster in the end, and the worst feature about this bill is that it goes on adding, adding, forever adding, to the volume of our paper money.

As the conventions of 1896 approached, Mr. Platt became greatly concerned about the currency plank of the Republican platform. The nomination of Mr. McKinley was assured several weeks before the meeting of the Convention at St. Louis, and those who had his fortunes in charge were arranging already the declaration of principles upon which he was to go before the people. Mark Hanna was determined that the issue of the campaign should be the tariff; for he felt that his candidate would make his strongest appeal as "the advance agent of prosperity," just as he had already won his way in the Republican primaries in that character. Both Hanna and McKinley thought it would be good politics to minimize the currency question so that the Western Republican adherents of the cause of free silver might not be driven to new party alignments. The Eastern leaders, most of whom had been supporters of Speaker Reed, were determined, on the other hand, that there should be no evasion of the currency issue, and that the party should place itself squarely on a platform declaring for the maintenance of the gold standard. It fell to the delegations from New England and New York to make this fight, and Mr. Platt, although not a delegate to the Convention, exerted his influence in behalf of an unequivocal declaration. On June 11th, he wrote emphatically to Samuel Fessenden:

We who represent States like Connecticut here in Washington feel very nervous and anxious with reference to what the platform shall be in St. Louis. There is nothing that I can urge upon you, and yet I feel as if I must say something. Here in Washington, where we are supposed to catch public sentiment, there is a feeling that the delegates who will apparently nominate McKinley will want

to tone down the platform so that it may not be entirely unacceptable to the free-coinage delegates. I cannot help feeling that a platform which can possibly be interpreted as favorable to silver would be disastrous. As it looks to me now, we have got to fight in the next campaign Democrats, Populists and the bolting silver Republicans, and we ought to make the money issue plain and distinct and unequivocal. If we can't win on such a platform, let us go down. We can at least lay the foundation for the party of the future, and I believe that we can carry more States on a square sound money platform than we can on one which can even be claimed to be equivocal. If we have an equivocal platform or one which any considerable number of people say is equivocal, we shall get no Democratic sound-money votes. If we have a square, honest declaration against free coinage and for the maintenance of the existing standard, we shall carry New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut by very large majorities, and I believe we can do better even in the States where the silver movement is feared by Republicans than we can upon a hesitating or evasive platform. I don't know what the Committee on Platform is likely to do, but, if it does not come up to the mark which we believe it should, I think some one in the Convention should make the fight. And looking the Convention over, I don't see but three men in the Convention who can make it. There may be others, but it seems to me that the fight will have to be made on the floor of the Convention by Warner Miller, Mr. Lodge, and yourself.

I hope you won't think that I am unduly frightened or exercised, but what I have heard in Washington the last few days has induced me to fear very much that our success may be imperilled by an attempt to placate the free-coinage Republicans.

The issue was joined at St. Louis under the leadership of Senator Lodge of Massachusetts, and Thomas C.

Platt of New York. Mr. Hanna, greatly against his will, was induced to put in the platform a straight out declaration for gold, on a threat that otherwise the fight would be carried to the floor of the convention. The subsequent campaign was conducted almost solely on the money issue, after a futile attempt to force the tariff to the front. Free silver was overwhelmingly beaten, and the way was clear for the formal legislative endorsement of the gold standard, which came at last with the Law of July, 1900.

CHAPTER XVI

REAL CURRENCY REFORM

The Finance Committee—Helps to Frame Law of 1900—Letter to Timothy Dwight—Consideration of Additional Measures of Relief—Opposed to Asset Currency—The Aldrich Bill—Conference at Warwick—A Central Bank.

COINCIDENT with the election of President McKinley the currency question assumed a new phase. Hitherto the advocates of a debased coinage had been in the aggressive, while the friends of a stable currency had as a rule contented themselves with resisting the encroachments of unsound finance. Now the tables were about to be turned. In the winter succeeding Mr. McKinley's election a group of business men, financial students and economists, entered upon a systematic campaign with a view to securing legislation which would insure the maintenance of the gold standard, the ultimate retirement of all classes of United States notes, and a banking system which should furnish credit facilities to every portion of the country with a safe and elastic circulation. Hugh H. Hanna of Indianapolis was the intelligent organizer who brought the scattered elements together, resulting in the Indianapolis Convention of January, 1897, and the Monetary Commission convened in Washington the following autumn. The general movement of which the Indianapolis Convention and the Monetary Com-

mission were conspicuous manifestations resulted in the enactment of the Law of March 14, 1900, and in an education of the public along the lines of sane finance, undoubtedly wholesome in effect, although accompanied, as was inevitable, by quixotic suggestions and unreasoning insistence on ideal schemes, impracticable in face of the necessity for legislative compromise.

Mr. Platt while sympathizing with the general movement, did not allow himself to be carried away by enthusiasm for any particular remedy. "I am not sure whether I can support the proposition for a monetary commission," he wrote on March 17th, 1897:

> Ever since I have been in the Senate, especially since the Tariff Commission of 1882, I have had very decided views as to the impolicy of commissions appointed outside of Congress to formulate legislation on given subjects, and have frequently taken occasion to express myself in the Senate on that subject. While entirely in sympathy with the advocates of a reformed currency system, I doubt very much whether anything is to be gained by a monetary commission. If we make commissions for one purpose to advise Congress what to do, we cannot discriminate and must grant them whenever there seems to be an earnest demand for them. It amounts purely to delegating the power of Congress to investigate and formulate legislation to that class of our citizens who desire the legislation. And while that might work well in case of a monetary commission, it will work very badly in the end, in my judgment, if that is understood to be the policy of Congress. . . . If we begin with commissions we shall very soon farm out legislation into the hands practically of men who want to secure it. Saying this, I do not conclusively say that I cannot favor a monetary commission, but such action is against all previously formed convictions.

He was then a member of the Finance Committee, and

was in constant touch with Mr. Aldrich in the consideration of all measures affecting the currency. During the summer of 1899, preceding the meeting of the Fifty-sixth Congress, there were conferences of members of the Finance Committee at Narragansett Pier and Manhattan Beach. President McKinley in his annual message impressed upon Congress the necessity of enacting a law to insure the maintenance of the gold standard. The Act of March 14, 1900, embodying explicit recognition of the gold standard, was the result of the endeavors of the Senate and House to come together. It was a long step in advance of previous legislation, but it was not by any means the ideal scheme which currency reformers had in mind; nor did it fully satisfy any of the men who were entrusted with the task of framing the law. Mr. Platt, as a member of the subcommittee of the Finance Committee, had a great deal to do with getting the bill into shape. He joined in the debate with the free-silver senators who opposed it and was engaged with Mr. Aldrich and Mr. Allison in bringing about an agreement in conference. He did not speak at length but in the course of the discussion he made it clear that he believed the United States could take no step more likely to advance the cause of international bimetallism than to let it be understood to the world that until we could secure the concurrence of other nations we were going to maintain the gold standard.

No sooner was the Law of 1900 enacted than advocates of reform began to pelt the men responsible for it with demands for legislation still further advanced. Mr. Hanna representing the monetary conference had two purposes: the interchangeability of all forms of currency and bank circulation based on

assets. As a member of the Finance Committee Mr. Platt received numerous letters urging his co-operation in these projects. But he was not inclined to hurry. He thought the Law of 1900 a much better measure than its critics would make out; "not that it is perfect, but it is easier to lament imperfections than it is to overcome them." To one correspondent he replied with a suggestion of mild reproof:

I wish people would believe that those who are responsible for legislation are as anxious to get things right as they are, but perhaps see more of the difficulties to be overcome.

The venerable Timothy Dwight of New Haven wrote him expressing the earnest hope that the Finance Committee would finally settle the currency question during the session so that there should be no further possibility of question or danger as to the permanent establishment of the gold standard. He also inquired whether the time was not ripe to adopt the measures which the Indianapolis Committee was urging. For Dr. Dwight's opinion Mr. Platt, a friend of many years, had a profound respect, and in reply he was at considerable pains to make clear his own position:

I assure you that I wish to do everything that may be necessary in order to prevent the possibility of the gold standard from being interfered with. The suggested legislation, however, presents many other serious questions that need the most careful consideration. I have not time for a long discussion of the subject, but right in the beginning of it are two matters to which I will allude.

The present law provides for the redemption in gold of about $430,000,000 of Government paper, greenbacks, treasury notes, etc. For this redemption we thought it

necessary to provide for the establishment and maintenance at all times of a reserve fund of $150,000,000 in gold. That is a large sum to lock up in the Treasury department. If a law is to be passed that makes all our money redeemable in gold, it will add to the volume of money to be redeemed enough of silver to bring it up to more than a thousand millions. If $150,000,000 was necessary to provide a safe redemption fund for $430,000,000 of paper, I cannot see why $300,000,000 would not be necessary as a fund to redeem a larger amount, and to shut that amount up in the Treasury, never to be used except for redemption purposes, would involve:

First, I think the necessity of selling more bonds to provide for it; and

Second, a withdrawal of an amount from circulation which might make serious trouble. I know it is said that it would be necessary to increase the redemption fund; that when it was once provided by law that redemption of the silver currency would be made in gold, nobody would want to redeem; but that argument is very much along the line of the greenbackers, that it is the Government fiat which gives value to currency.

The second matter to which I allude is the claim that the Government should provide that all public and private debts should be payable in gold. In other words, that it should declare primarily that our bonds, which on the face of them are payable in coin, should be payable in gold only, and that all obligations of the Government, and of private individuals should be thus payable. The House bill which came over to the Senate contained this provision, and it also contained the provision that the present legal-tender quality of the silver dollar should continue. I do not see how it is practicable to provide that all obligations of the Government should be payable in gold, and still keep the legal-tender quality of the silver dollar, and there is certainly an inconsistency in saying that silver shall be a legal tender to pay obligations to

the Government, while the Government shall pay all its obligations in gold.

I only allude to these two matters to show that it is much easier to say that there should be further legislation for the security of the gold standard, than to determine just what form that legislation should take. There are a great many other matters connected with our system and its practical operation which furnish difficulties to be thought of when further legislation is proposed. Our currency is pretty safe now in the hands of officers who wish to maintain the gold standard. No law that could be passed would make it safe if there should be a political change which put the Government in the hands of those who desire to destroy the gold standard. I cannot think that with all the delicate and difficult problems to be solved by further legislation, it is wise to be in haste about it.

In other letters he went into greater detail. It seemed to him that the declaring of our different kinds of currency to be exchangeable would hardly do away with the necessity for a gold reserve. Simply calling silver money gold, or as good as gold, would not make it so. Our money other than gold would be greenbacks, treasury notes, silver dollars, and silver certificates, and they would have the value of gold simply because what is gold in the treasury could be exchanged for them. It was true that the people did not want their money if they were sure that they could get it, but it was this very fact which made it necessary to provide what Tilden used to call "a central reservoir of gold":

There is not and there will not be as long as present conditions endure, any practical difficulty. The country can carry this paper because it provides a sufficient fund for the redemption of all but the silver currency; and, as to the silver currency, it takes it in payment of debts due to it, and the volume is so limited that it is thus practically

exchangeable for gold. . . . We have more gold in this country now than any other country in the world, and more in our Treasury than any other nation has in its treasury. It will be a question before long what we are going to do with it, and I hope that, as the situation begins to emphasize itself to the apprehension of the people, a disposition to retire all our paper currency will make headway; I mean all paper that is not issued upon the deposit of an equal amount of gold; in other words, gold certificates. I think the whole idea of paper currency issued by the Government upon any other basis is vicious, and must eventually make trouble. And yet, the popular business sentiment is now entirely against the retirement of our paper currency. As a practical measure, the greenbacks cannot be retired without either substituting something else for them or contracting our currency to the extent of their retirement. A radical contraction of currency would plunge us into all sorts of financial trouble; that is the objection to taking in greenbacks and keeping them except when someone wants them in exchange for gold. One of the things that has made business good and keeps it good is the fact that there was a little bit of expansion of the currency in our last financial bill, not to the extent of real inflation, but an expansion which kept pace with the demand of business. I do not think that people have generally thought of that. A simple declaration of the gold standard, without providing this means for an expanded currency mostly through the national banks, would scarcely have kept things as satisfactory as they have been kept. This is a pretty wide question, and it is like other great questions in that every one can agree on the purpose to be accomplished, while they cannot agree on the details. It is easy to say of the shipping bill that it is a measure calculated to restore our merchant marine and, from that standpoint, every one wants it; but when you come to the question of how it is to be done, the best of people are in doubt. It is just so with the money question. Every one

agrees that we should do everything in our power to maintain the gold standard, but when you come to consider the special steps by which this is to be accomplished, people may well be puzzled.

In spite of the pressure from business interests nothing tangible was done for over two years. President Roosevelt in his message of December, 1902, suggested the desirability of additional measures

> with the view of encouraging the use of such instrumentalities as will automatically supply every legitimate demand of productive industries and of commerce, not only in the amount, but in the character, of circulation, and of making all kinds of money interchangeable and, at the will of the holder, convertible into the established gold standard.

After waiting sufficiently long upon the initiative of the House, Mr. Aldrich, early in February, 1903, less than a month before the adjournment of Congress, introduced and reported from the Finance Committee a bill which if enacted would have relieved the situation to some extent. It authorized the Secretary of the Treasury to deposit in the national banks public money received from all sources, including customs, and to accept as security certain state and municipal bonds as well as United States bonds, the banks to pay not less than one and one-half per cent. interest on government deposits. It also gave to Panama bonds all rights and privileges of two per cent. consols deposited as security for circulation, and authorized the Secretary of the Treasury to retain in the general fund national bank-notes received in the ordinary course of business and pay them out in current expenditures of the Government.

Consideration of this bill was prevented by wanton

obstruction, but it served as a text for subsequent discussion and contained the substance of future legislation. After the adjournment of the Fifty-seventh Congress in the spring of 1903, the Senate leaders felt that the time had arrived for an understanding if possible in regard to a measure to be enacted during the approaching long session of the Fifty-eighth Congress. A conference of Republican members of the Finance Committee was called to meet at Hot Springs, Virginia, in May. Mr. Platt was ill with an attack of acute indigestion and could not attend. Another meeting was held at Senator Aldrich's home at Warwick, Rhode Island, in the first week in August. Those invited to attend it were Senators Allison, Spooner, and Platt. Mr. Platt felt that the outlook for intelligent legislation was anything but clear. Personally he believed in the establishment of a Central National Bank as a sound financial programme, but he feared that the time was not ripe for proposing such a measure to the country. Writing to John H. Flagg, of New York, on July 29, 1903, he said:

On the 6th of August I go down to Aldrich's as one of a subcommittee to consider financial matters. Sometimes I think it is almost a farce that I should be taking part in proposed legislation affecting our financial system, and at other times I think perhaps I know fully as much about it as those who are better financiers. This present condition seems to be one of deciding where doctors disagree. I find the people who think themselves financial experts have many different schemes, and each thinks his own scheme is the only way possible out of what I think is universally admitted to be a defective governmental system. I doubt if any of them point the way out. I agree that, if there were some way of making a more elastic

currency without running the risk of depreciating its security, it would be a good thing to do, but I doubt very much whether issuing an emergency circulation, secured only by the assets of a bank and taxation, would be a real remedy for the defects which exist, or indeed, would serve to make a more elastic currency, while on the other hand, it is possible that it would be the first step towards what, in old times, was called "wild cat banking," a situation which was met by requiring that when banks issued circulation, there should be undoubted security behind it. I do not know. I am all at sea about the matter, and my only consolation in that respect is that I think others are as much afloat as I am, though they do not seem to know it.

A greater trouble to my mind than the want of an elastic currency is that, so long as our receipts exceed our expenditures, actual money must be locked up in the vaults of the sub-treasury. If we, in this country, could have a national bank, or a governmental connection with a strong bank, as in England, France, Germany, and other commercial countries, and thus do away with the sub-treasury, I think we would be better off, but that is impossible, in view of public sentiment. It is strange how ideas developed by a particular situation which occurred years, and even a century ago, dominate public sentiment now. The national bank idea was sound finance, but its experience made every one opposed to a national bank, and you have only to mention one now to stir up the whole community to hostility. It is just another instance of ideas which fitted one set of circumstances controlling another and entirely different set in after-times, like the Alien and Sedition laws, which became so unpopular as the result of political party contention, that now any attempt to punish even the utterances of anarchy is howled down by a shout about returning to the old Alien and Sedition laws. Any attempt to have a decent army is met by the old cry, first raised in the time of our Revolution, as the result of hatred of the British, that a standing army is a menace to our lib-

IN CONFERENCE AT WARWICK

SENATORS PLATT, SPOONER, ALLISON, AND ALDRICH

erties. But, however all this may be, it is manifest that we cannot revive the idea of a national bank. The reduction of taxation, even to the extent of making it necessary to use some of our surplus, is, in my judgment, the real remedy for money stringency, but that is difficult of accomplishment, and when we do reduce taxation to what we suppose is the level of expenditure, it turns out that we have still a surplus of moneys that we cannot use, which must go either into the sub-treasury or be deposited in banks.

If we are to have bad times our receipts will fall off, and there will be no trouble about the locking up of money, but the banks which have received deposits of government money seem to think that the Government must not call on them for repayment, and so we are in danger of the deposit in banks becoming permanent. I confess I do not know what to do. I should like to do something to relieve the situation. If this Wall Street experience is the beginning of bad times in business, no one knows what the result of the next Presidential election will be. You see it is a serious problem.

The conference at Warwick went into the subject of currency legislation with great thoroughness, but, in view of the conflicting opinions of the advocates of a reformed system, there was little expectation of affirmative action by Congress. It was understood that Congress was to meet in extraordinary session to take up the question of Cuban reciprocity, and this ought to give time for consideration of financial problems, but Mr. Platt did not feel much encouraged regarding legislation. Writing to Mr. Flagg on September 14, 1903, he said:

It looks to me as if the House would not pass any bill whatever. Fowler, at the head of the Banking and Currency Committee, has evolved a scheme, consisting of three

propositions: (1) Retirement of the greenbacks; (2) payment by banks of two per cent. interest on government deposits; (3) asset currency. I do not believe that the Republicans of the House will adopt his ideas. I do not think his plan has many advocates in banking or financial circles. I need not go into lengthy argument to show why I do not think it a wise or safe scheme. I merely say that I shall be surprised if it meets with favor in the House. The Secretary of the Treasury has a cure-all, in a plan to allow national banks to issue emergency currency up to fifty per cent. of their circulation, secured by a six per cent. tax and a lien on assets. I think that would be a dead failure. I do not believe banks would take out that currency. It has many and fatal defects, in my judgment, even if they would. We shall probably propose the Aldrich bill with modifications. . . . Probably we could pass such a bill in the Senate after the Democrats are through trying to formulate an issue for the Presidential campaign, but the necessity for an additional supply of money to move the crops will have gone by long before we could get it to a vote. The Democratic Presidential campaign is of course to be conducted upon the theory that the Republicans favor the great moneyed interests of the country at the expense of those who are poor or have only moderate capital, and any effort which is intended to relieve the monetary condition will be said by them to be a part of our general plan to build up the millionaires and impoverish every one else, so that, though we may pass such a bill as we shall probably propose, it will come too late to be of service this fall, and then, if, as I surmise, the House passes nothing, that will be the end of it. If the House should pass some kind of a bill, we might, in conference, get some items of minor importance, which we could agree upon. If we could get the main features of the Aldrich bill passed by Congress quickly, I am sure that it would obviate any money stringency this fall, but this I do not look for. The Fowler plan and all others which involve

asset currency, taxable or untaxable, look to the complete change of our currency system, and it seems to me that it would be folly to attempt such a change by legislation in this Congress, on the eve of a presidential election. We have a safe currency now. It is also an abundant currency for the ordinary conditions of business. If we had the two additional features, permitting deposit of all receipts in banks, without interest, and the right of the Secretary of the Treasury, in his discretion, during times of stringency, to waive redemption by national banks of their notes, using them in the current business of the Treasury, the same as greenbacks are used, while the emergency lasted, we would have no trouble, but you can see as well as I the difficulty in reaching any such conclusion as this. I should not be surprised to see the session go by without any definite legislation. I hope that something may be evolved along the lines I have suggested, but my hope is not very strong.

Mr. Platt's doubts were justified. The President recommended the passage of a bill authorizing the deposit of customs receipts in national banks—a mild measure enough—but the Congress went by without action of any kind, owing to the impractical attitude of the members of the Banking and Currency Committee in the House, and the Senator never had another opportunity to participate in financial legislation.

CHAPTER XVII

A STAUNCH PROTECTIONIST

The Cleveland Message of 1887—Attack upon the Administration Policy—A Comprehensive Plea for Protection—Defender of American Industries—Opposition to the Mills Bill—Contrast between Labor and Industry North and South—The Duty on Tin Plate—The Tariff not Responsible for the Trusts.

PROTECTION to American industries was one of the cardinal tenets of Mr. Platt's political creed, and this must constantly be borne in mind when considering his course in legislation. No measure which even remotely threatened to weaken the protective system received his support unless on careful consideration he concluded that some greater end could be advanced by its enactment. His career in the Senate embraced a period during which four measures were formulated there involving a general revision of the tariff, and several abortive attempts at tariff legislation were made in the House.

The tariff of 1883 claimed his attention because he was the representative of a great manufacturing State, and because for that reason, if for no other, he would have been expected to see that manufacturing interests did not suffer at the hands of Congress. But he was comparatively young in the service then, and it does not appear from the records that he took any conspicuous part in the deliberations of the Senate. He had no patience with the theories of tariff reform which about

that time agitated American politics, but there was no occasion for exploiting himself in debate and he confined his activities to looking after the interest of the industries upon which his State so greatly depended.

The revision of 1883 was preliminary to a general agitation of the whole tariff question to which the campaign of 1884 contributed, and which was stimulated by William R. Morrison and the "Horizontal" bill with which for a time he beguiled the Democratic House of Representatives. But the discussion might have continued for years to have little except academic interest had it not been for President Cleveland who in the middle of his first term precipitated the issue in his annual message of December, 1887. The question then became in a flash the most vital issue before the American people, and it remained so until the enactment of the Dingley law in 1897 brought industrial contentment after a long period of political and economic unrest.

The message of 1887 seemed to Mr. Platt what it seemed to many others,—a wanton attack upon a hitherto accepted American policy, entered upon with no reason then apparent, except the plain political reason of furnishing an issue upon which the party then in power could go to the country in the hope of continuing its predominance.

During the winter of 1887–8, it served as a text for a general tariff debate, introducing a controversy which kept the industries of the United States in a turmoil for years. Mr. Platt by this time had become one of the recognized authorities in the Senate on industrial and economic questions, and this was a subject upon which he had deep rooted convictions. The lines were forming for the contest which was to come in 1888 and which he hoped would bring Connecticut back to the Repub-

lican ranks. He could hardly have kept silence if he had wished to, and he contributed to the debate a speech which occupied in delivery a part of two days, February 6th and 7th. It was the most comprehensive argument on the tariff question which he ever undertook, for although in later years he came to have a commanding influence in the shaping of tariff legislation he left to others the discussion of principles involved. It was an orthodox plea for protection which exhibited familiarity with the discussion preceding it and with the general literature of the subject, as well as with the statistics of the industries likely to be affected by a revision of the tariff. It attracted the attention of the country and served as a text for countless other arguments.

With the straightforwardness which was characteristic of all his political utterances he put the question bluntly: "Is the President of the United States a free trader?" And letting his argument develop from that inquiry, he carried it on to a far-reaching defence of the doctrine of protection:

> I do not propose to be deterred from asking, and if I can, from answering this question, because the President suggests that "to dwell upon the theories of protection and free trade savors too much of bandying epithets." I am a protectionist and I consider it no epithet when I am called so. If the President of the United States is a free trader he ought to be willing to be called so and not consider it an epithet if that word is used to define his position.

The immediate timeliness of the speech did not exclude many truths which were of permanent application, as applicable to the discussion to-day as they were twenty years ago:

Are the manufacturers of this country realizing "immense profits"? Are they the millionaires of the land? You can count upon your fingers and thumbs and without counting them many times over, all the manufacturers of this country who in manufacturing have accumulated a fortune equal to a million dollars, and in nine cases out of ten either these men or their fathers have struggled from the bottom, where poverty pinched the hardest and where privation was the greatest, up to their success. They have been workmen at the bench, at the loom, in the factory, in the shop, in the mill, and what they have they have obtained in a manner which the common judgment of mankind says is honest and fair. There is not a laboring man in this country who when he comes to think of it levels his claim that men are obtaining the rewards of investment without the rendition of a fair equivalent therefor against the manufacturer. No—they are not the millionaires. Who ever heard a manufacturer called a "king"? We hear of "cattle kings," and "wheat kings," and "iron kings"—but you never hear that word applied to a manufacturer.

He warned the men who were seeking to destroy the protective tariff that they must not delude themselves with the idea that they were aiming their blows against New England:

The New England manufacturer is the man who has least interest of all classes of men in the preservation of the protective system. He is interested in it, indeed, but others, and all others are interested more. If I were to name the order in which the different classes are interested in the maintenance of a protective tariff, I would say first the laborers everywhere, in whatever field they wipe the sweat from their brows; more than any manufacturers are the wage-receiving men of this country interested in its preservation. The blow hits them first and it may as well be understood, and they are coming to understand it

all over the land. First, the men who work in manufactories, the artisans, are hit; next, agriculturists and the men who work on farms; next, manufacturers in other sections of the country where they are not as well established, and where the industries may indeed be said even now to be infant industries; next, those engaged in transportation; next, those engaged in merchandise; and last, and least, if you please—the manufacturers of New England.

If the policy of free trade is to prevail, if our progress is to be arrested and our development hindered, and if the inevitable results of it are to follow and we are to have disaster and ruin, the first men who will emerge from the ruin will be the manufacturers of New England, the first who will adjust themselves to the new order of things and go on once more as they have in the past, endeavoring to build up and develop and make a strong, powerful, glorious nation. The interest of the New England manufacturer is more that he may have a market in which he can sell his goods than anything else. That is what he wants. That is where free trade hits him hardest—the surrender of our market to the foreigner.

Then he took up the argument for free raw materials which at that time was just beginning to appeal to the manufacturers of the East:

But perhaps as favorite a method of attack upon the tariff by the free trader as any is the claim that raw materials should be free, and why? Because the free trader knows that the protection of raw materials is the keystone to the protective arch; that when you have once ceased to protect the production of what are called raw materials in the country, there is no logical ground upon which any article can be protected here. If that kind of production which employs the greatest percentage of labor in this country cannot receive protection, then nothing should receive protection; and it is, therefore, that the assault upon protection is made upon what are called raw materials.

It is more than that; it is an appeal to the supposed selfishness of manufacturers. The manufacturers are told —told by the President in his message—that they can cheapen the cost of production if they can have free raw materials. Sir, the manufacturer who seeks to obtain raw materials free and demands a tariff upon his product is a selfish man, and selfish almost to the point of criminality; and the manufacturers of New England, as a class, spurn that bribe. When in the preparation of the bill advised by the leading free traders out of Congress in this country, the proposition is made to purchase the support of New England manufacturers by free wool, by free iron, by free coal, I tell you that they mistake the manufacturers of Connecticut and the rest of New England. They know that this is a system or it is nothing. They know that every industry must be protected to thrive and they know that protection alone can make us generally prosperous as a nation. They are not to be diverted from this issue.

The only raw materials are those which grow out of the earth or those which repose beneath its surface. The moment you dig out the iron, and the coal, and the copper, and the marble, and the salt, and the clay, that moment human labor is added to the natural product, and from that moment it is no longer raw material. When you cut down the tree and begin to saw it into timber or into boards it is no longer raw material.

When the farmer raises or buys his flock of sheep and produces his wool by means of his labor, that is no longer raw material. Human labor, the great energizing, civilizing force of the world and of humanity, has entered into that product. I would not put it too strongly if I were to say the soul of man has entered into and transformed that natural product. It is no longer raw material. Go into any one of the manufacturing establishments of this country; look at one that I have in my mind in my own State. In that factory they take copper in the ingot as it comes from the mine into the front door. When it goes out again

it goes in the shape of copper wire of four one-thousandths of an inch in diameter. Into that crude copper ingot has passed the highest thought of man; his brain is in the wire—his soul is there.

In the course of his speech, Mr. Platt came to the question of the surplus which had ostensibly moved President Cleveland to his sensational and radical recommendation. To the thrifty Connecticut statesman the existence of a surplus did not seem to be an unmixed evil and, indeed, for those who have become familiar with the Treasury statistics of the last ten years since the Dingley law went into effect, it is difficult to conceive of the consternation into which the comparatively meagre accumulations of 1887 threw those who were entrusted with the administration of the Government. He pointed out that the actual accumulation in the Treasury on February 1, 1888, was only about $35,000,000. He asked why this accumulation had been permitted if it were such an evil:

Why has taxation not been reduced—the taxation which created from year to year this accumulation? Why has the Democratic party in power in that section of Congress which originates measures of this character not sent to this body some bill looking to the reduction of taxation? It stood pledged by its platform, by the professions of its leaders on every stump and at every hustings in the United States, immediately upon its accession to power to take steps for the reduction of the surplus. They misrepresented the amount of the surplus in their presidential convention of 1884, as I will show; but if there was any one thing which they stood pledged to do it was immediately and without delay to adopt measures for the reduction of this surplus accumulation in the Treasury. . . .

What reason can be given for this delay in the past,

what reason can be given for this delay to-day, if it be not that the accumulation of money in the Treasury and our annual surplus income are being used and deliberately used, to force Congress into a destruction of the protective system of the country?

He reminded the Senate that in less than three years we had a debt falling due of $230,000,000, and asked why the administration did not try to anticipate the payment of that debt:

What would be good financiering for a business man if he had money on hand which he had no use for, and had a debt falling due at a distant date? Would it not be to go to this creditor and say: "I have money on hand which I have no use for; you have a note against me falling due in future; I wish to make some arrangement with you whereby I can take up that note now." Why has not the Government done so? It would have made money by the transaction. It will make money if it will adopt that policy now instead of the policy of allowing the money to accumulate in the Treasury and in national banks until the debt falls due. . . . Why should the Government insist upon this money lying idle in the Treasury rather than attempt to anticipate the debt of the Government? If one quarter as much time had been spent in attempting to devise some fair plan by which an arrangement with the creditors of the Government could be made for the anticipation of the debt which should be satisfactory to them and profitable to the Government as has been spent in conferences to try to devise some scheme for striking down the industries of this country, that arrangement could long ago have been perfected.

My experience in life has taught me—and somewhat painfully taught me—that it is not a pleasant condition to be in, and that it is not good business for a man to be in a situation where he has no money in his pocket except

that which he must pay out for his daily expenses. That man is not very well off financially. What is true of the man is true of the United States. The idea of reducing so that there shall be no money in the Treasury, depleted entirely, run from day to day and hand to mouth, using its daily receipts to meet daily expenditures, is a policy which is entirely unwarranted by any sound financial theory. . . . I would expend more. I would have a little patriotism instead of so much penuriousness. I would have some coast defences. I would not be longer at the mercy of foreign powers, at the mercy of England, whose system it is sought to engraft upon our republican institutions. I would have a navy built as if we intended to have a navy, and not in the pottering way in which it has been going on under this administration, and I would have reasonable appropriations for internal improvements.

I would have, even if I do not think very much of our foreign representation, our diplomats, our ministers, our consuls, enabled to represent this country abroad in a respectable manner, to say the least, and I would pay them enough so that they could do so. . . . I would have an American policy, and whatever was reasonably calculated to extend and develop and foster that American policy and give us a foothold amongst the nations and respectability everywhere befitting the condition of a free Republic, I would spend money for.

He agreed to the necessity of some reduction, but he did not believe in the reduction of taxation on the President's plan, which in his opinion would result in the destruction of the protective system. He would have made the reduction elsewhere than on manufactured articles:

Why not reduce by repealing internal-revenue taxation? Because the protective system would be left in force in this country. War taxes! There is one tax that is abso-

lutely a war tax, and that is the internal-revenue tax. The tariff tax, if it were a tax, existed to some extent before the war. . . . The war tax of the country is the internal-revenue tax. Why not repeal that or as much of it as is necessary to get the required reduction?

It is a tax upon our productions, be they tobacco or corn. It is a tax that operates unequally and yet the President of the United States says directly that no one objects to that; and this great accumulation, this surplus of money, must pile up in the Treasury rather than touch the internal-revenue tax! How is it that this war tax, about which we have heard so much, has all at once become so sacred?

He asked how manufacturers were to be compensated for the loss which the President proposed to inflict on them:

They can get cheap raw materials and then he says they can compete with other nations in the markets of the world. The poor, pitiful privilege that they are to have to save them from ruin is to go away from their own country to seek markets in other countries. Foreign trade is desirable, but it is not worth obtaining at the sacrifice of the trade of this country. The trade of this country is the marvel of God's own civilization, and to give up any portion of it in the hope that we may in some way compensate ourselves by getting the markets of the world, as they are called, is the height of folly and absurdity.

Where are the "markets of the world"? Not in England, not in Germany, not in France, not in Belgium or Holland. We are not going to sell our goods in England or the other countries I have named in competition with the foreign manufacturers. Freight and factorage are against us. We are not going to sell in lands which England holds by the strong power of her army. We are shut up to South America; and if we could get all the trade of South America, it would not be 6 per cent. of our home market. I wish we had it; but the idea of opening our ports, taking off

our tariff duties, letting the foreigner flood our market with his goods, and then telling American manufacturers and American laboring men that we can compensate ourselves by going into the markets of the world if we can only have reduced duties, it seems to me is idle, and, of all free-trade sophistries, is the shallowest.

His concluding words were:

Sir, it is too late in the century to belittle the system of protection by asserting, as the President and all other free traders assert, that it lays a tax upon the consumer paid to the manufacturer. It is too late in the century to seek to destroy that system by appealing to the disquiet of laborers in the hope of arraying them against it because it protects alone or primarily the manufacturers and brings "immense profits" to their pockets.

Protection is for the whole of United America; its benefits are as extensive as our boundaries; its "immense profits" are as widely diffused as our citizenship—it blesses and beautifies every home, it helps and strengthens every citizen, the importer of foreign wares alone excepted. It is the policy of United America in its competition with all the world. Under the fostering influence of that system America has gained its rightful place in front of the grand procession of the nations. And unless we blindly permit a Democratic President and a so-called Democratic party to destroy this, our sure safe-guard of national success, United America will continue to lead the world in the grand struggle for human advancement.

In due season after many hearings, Roger Q. Mills presented to the House from the Committee on Ways and Means the tariff bill which bore his name. The bill occupied the attention of the House for several months. It gave William McKinley the opportunity for recognition as the apostle of protection which ultimately made him President, and it gave Thomas B. Reed the

chance for leadership which made him Speaker of the House. When it reached the Senate an enervating summer had already laid its hand upon the capital. The great national conventions were impending, and the country was on the threshold of a campaign for the Presidency which it was seen must turn in large measure upon the issues presented by the Mills bill and the Cleveland message.

The Senate Committee on Finance, which was dominated by a Republican majority, consisting of Morrill, Sherman, Jones of Nevada, Allison, Aldrich, and Hiscock, had framed a bill of its own, along protection lines, and this was reported to the Senate as a substitute for the measure passed by the House. It was known of course that no bill could become a law, and the debate which followed was purely for effect upon the approaching election. The discussion continued until within three weeks of the election day.

There was little for any member of the Senate to do except to remain in his place to contribute to a quorum, to vote on motions which required a record, and occasionally to speak.

Mr. Platt contented himself with following the Committee on Finance, interposing an occasional question during the debate, and voting with due regularity. He made only one speech of greater length than a few sentences. This was near the close of the session, on October 11, 1888. Then he discussed the issue of protection from the interesting view-point of the development of labor and industry North and South:

> Two systems of labor were established contemporaneously in this country. About a year before the *Mayflower* touched the Massachusetts shore, a ship landed at Jamestown, Virginia, loaded with slaves. From that time these two

labor systems have been antagonistic forces in the country, and all our woes and troubles and conflicts have been occasioned by the "irrepressible conflict" between these two labor systems. One system involved the idea that labor should be unpaid and ignorant. At first it involved the idea that capital should own the laborer, but always to this day the idea that labor shall be poorly paid and ignorant. The other system involved the idea that labor should be well paid and should be intelligent.

The Southern system, if I may so call it without disrespect, was based upon the idea that the laborer should have no status in society, that he should have no political rights, no civil rights, no "inalienable rights." The other was based upon the idea that the laborer should have an equal status in society with every other man; that he should have political rights and civil rights; that he should be one of the citizens of the Government, responsible for its administration and responsible for its progress; that he should be in the broadest sense a freeman. The Southern system where the laborer was unpaid, where he was kept ignorant, where it was a criminal offence to teach him to read even the Scriptures, was adapted only to the rudest cultivation of the soil. The Northern system, where the laborer was well paid and intelligent and free to engage in the "pursuit of happiness," inevitably tended to the diversification of industries.

These two labor systems determined where manufactories should first be planted in the United States. It was not the enterprise of capitalists; it was solely and purely the character of labor which spread over these different sections of the United States which determined where manufacturing should spring up and flourish. The New England States, where this labor system was first planted, could but attempt to engage in manufacturing. The Southern States, where the ignorant and unpaid systems of labor prevailed, could only engage in the raising of cotton, sugar, tobacco, and like agricultural products. Skill,

education, and aspiration in the laborer not only make agriculture profitable, but are absolutely essential to even the rudimentary development of mechanical industries.

To have supposed that manufacturing could at that day have found a foothold in the Southern section of this country was to suppose that you could reverse a universal law of political economy.

In the second session of the Fiftieth Congress, after the defeat of Cleveland by Harrison, the Senate continued to debate the tariff bill which was still on the calendar; and to this useless debate Mr. Platt contributed occasional remarks. One brief speech which he made on the proposal to impose a duty on tin-plate is interesting by reason of the success which finally resulted from the imposition of the tin-plate duty:

I want to vote for every duty which will establish a new industry in this country—that is to say, an industry which under any circumstances it can be supposed can be profitably carried on in this country. If employment can be found for 70,000 additional workmen in this country in the manufacture of the whole or a large portion of these 283,000 tons of tin-plate which we now pay our money to England for, I want that opportunity for the employment of labor to be satisfied; and I do not believe that this duty is going to result in any great increase of the price of tin-plate; I think it very doubtful whether it results in any, if the usual course pursued by foreign manufacturers is adopted by them. When they see there is a probability that tin-plate factories will be established in this country, they will put down the price quite equal to the amount that is added to the duty; and even if the price is temporarily raised, all the experience of this country shows that it will immediately fall to or below its present price.

On another occasion he considered briefly the relation of the tariff to the trusts:

As it appears to me, the question of trusts has nothing whatever to do with the question of duties. It seems to me that the righteous indignation which exists at a great many trusts in this country (against all trusts that have the features which make them obnoxious) is made use of to attack the tariff.

Trusts are not indigenous to the United States. The worst trusts are to be found abroad, and many of them in England, where there is no tariff. There is not a worse trust for the United States than the copper trust which exists in France. There is no trust which is bearing upon our people more unfavorably, more injuriously, and the tariff has nothing to do with that; the rate of duty has nothing to do with that.

I merely rose to say that while I join in the indignation against those combinations which put up the price of necessaries of life, which put up the price of articles that enter into general use, I do protest against this continued reiteration in the Senate that they are the result in some way of protective duties.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE FATEFUL FIFTY-FIRST CONGRESS

McKinley Tariff and the Lodge Elections Bill—Democratic Obstruction in the Senate—An Unswerving Supporter of the Party Programme—Argues for Enactment of Both Bills—The Quay Resolution—Enactment of the Tariff Bill—The Election Bill Postponed—Lukewarm towards Blaine's Reciprocity Proposal—Unchanged by Republican Defeat.

ON the assembling of the Fifty-first Congress in December, 1889, the Republican party, controlling both legislative and executive branches of the Government, for the first time in years found itself in a position to undertake constructive legislation. First among the measures to which the party had pledged itself was a revision of the tariff along the lines of protection, next the enactment of a law to insure the integrity and purity of Federal elections. In order to fulfil either of these promises or to do other essential things it was necessary first to revise the rules of the House so as to give the majority a chance to do business, as the Democratic minority, lacking only a few votes of control, made no concealment of its purpose to prevent, by obstructive parliamentary tactics, the enactment of all measures which they did not like. Speaker Reed by heroic measures early in the session effected the change of rules which won for him the title of "Czar" and thus placed the House in a position to carry out its part of the political programme. The McKinley Tariff bill and

the Lodge Elections bill, taking their names from the chairmen of the committees which reported them, were promptly passed and sent to the Senate. There the two measures, possessing nothing in common except the stamp of party regularity, were to run along for months, impeding one another's progress and each threatening the other's chances.

On April 24, 1890, Senator Hoar from the Committee on Privileges and Elections reported the Elections bill to the Senate. Senator Pugh of Alabama for the Democratic minority made a report in which he declared with emphasis that the passage of the bill would be resisted by every method known to parliamentary law and to the Constitution. On June 18th, Senator Morrill from the Finance Committee reported the Tariff bill with amendments, which was in effect a substitute, founded on the measure reported as a substitute for the Mills bill in 1888. The Finance Committee had the same Republican membership as in the preceding Congress. Mr. Platt was not a member, though by long service and demonstrated usefulness he was close in the councils of Allison and Aldrich, who had most to do with the initial steps of shaping tariff legislation

In the face of threatened Democratic obstruction, the Republican majority was concerned chiefly in bringing the bill to a vote so that it might go into operation well in advance of the November elections, and all unnecessary speaking in defence of the measure was to be discouraged. This was especially agreeable to Mr. Platt who, following his usual practice, took no part in the debate except at times when he believed he could be of immediate service, and the *Congressional Record* contains no report of any speech from him which would occupy more than fifteen minutes in delivery. He did no

talking for his constituents; and was interested solely in seeing that the bill should be evolved as speedily and in as favorable a form as possible. But he was solicitous that the two great political measures of the session should become laws,—as much concerned about one as about the other,—and for a long time it looked as though the Senate would be able to come to a vote on neither. After the farce of unlimited debate had been going on for several weeks, the country began to call upon the Senate to get to work. The press, instead of condemning the minority, which was responsible for the delay, turned its batteries upon the majority, which was doing its very best to bring about a vote, and, coupled with this criticism, illogically enough, was a wholesale denunciation of the very bills upon which action was demanded. Mr. Platt was kept busy explaining to people at home just what the trouble was, and he did not mince words in upholding the policy of his party. To one correspondent who had written him a complaining letter he replied:

I do not suppose the people who are talking in opposition to the "McKinley bill" as it is called have any very definite idea of the bill as a whole.

We carried the Presidential election on two issues: The one, that we would enact a protective tariff law; and the other, that we would endeavor to have honest elections. . . . Now what are we going to do—abandon the idea of protection to American industries? And are we going to abandon our opportunity to secure fair elections? If so we need never again talk of protection and honest elections. For it will be said that having the three branches of the administration and the opportunity to pass laws, we deliberately refused to do so. . . . I am a protectionist whether in public or in private life; and I can not abandon

my lifelong views on this subject whatever the result may be personally or politically.

I am sorry to see you speak of the "election bill" as a "force bill." There is not an element of force in it from the beginning to the end of it. If the Republican party, having the opportunity to enact a law, the sole purpose of which is to allow people to vote in Congressional elections and which contains no element of force, deliberately declines to do it, how can it ever again complain that the nation is governed by a party which exists only by a fraudulent suppression of votes? And what is the Republican party to contend for if it abandons these two issues?

With equal frankness he wrote to William C. Miner of Madison, Connecticut:

I don't see how or where you got your idea about "reimbursing interested parties for money advanced to the campaign fund of '88 by an increase of taxes." I should not suppose that such a fiction was seriously believed anywhere. . . . I fear that you have been giving too much heed to the misrepresentations persistently and continuously reiterated in certain newspapers that seem to think the country would be better off if its industries were crippled here and transferred to other countries. . . . Financially, socially, morally, and politically, I believe that protection is the best thing for Connecticut, for the United States, and for all the people of the United States; and so believing I am bound to support it. I believe too in allowing people to vote everywhere; and when it is a question of the election of members of Congress, where a suppression of the vote in any State is a direct and absolute wrong to my own State, I believe it is the duty of Congress to provide for honest elections everywhere. I don't speak of any particular election law. We have a law now, under which marshals were appointed at the last Congressional election in Meriden, as well as in New Haven, Hartford, Waterbury, Bridgeport, and the other large towns. They

were appointed by Democrats; they did n't hurt me and they did n't hurt any one. And I know of no reason why such a law should not be extended so that the officers appointed in Connecticut to have an oversight of Congressional elections can be appointed in the States where the great wrong on Connecticut is, I believe, perpetrated. As to the details of the bill, that is another question. They ought to be of uniform application, and so guarded that no injustice shall be done. But if we are going to have a republican form of government, we must have honest elections.

The leaders of the Senate plodded painfully along while the critics were snarling at their heels, until signs of restlessness began to show among some of those who must be depended on if the party programme was to be carried through. A little group of Republicans, most of them from far Western States, were hostile to the Elections bill, believing it to be a bad political move, while others representing great industrial States were ready to sacrifice the Elections bill or any other measure in order to insure the enactment of a protective tariff law. One of these was Quay of Pennsylvania who, after the Tariff bill had been two months before the Senate, undertook to open a way for its passage by offering a resolution fixing the order of business. The resolution provided that during the rest of the session the Senate would take up for consideration no legislative business other than the pending Tariff bill, conference reports, appropriation bills, and certain other measures among which the Elections bill was conspicuous by its absence; the consideration of all bills other than those mentioned, to be postponed to the following session and a vote on the tariff to be had on August 30th. While the resolution was never acted on, its mere introduc-

tion, suggesting an arrangement between the Democrats and a few Republicans, was a sufficient indication of what was bound to happen. Mr. Platt, who had been urging a change in the rules to fix a limit to debate, took this turn of affairs to heart: "The situation here in the Senate is exasperating beyond measure," he wrote to A. H. Kellam of New Haven, on August 18th, the day on which Quay's resolution was introduced:

It has been perfectly evident that the Democrats have been consuming time in debate in every possible way that they could devise, short of laying themselves open to the charge of wilful obstruction, their object being so to prolong the consideration of measures that the Elections bill might not be reached at this session. Since we came to the consideration of the Tariff bill I think they have laid themselves open in its discussion to the charge of wilful obstruction. With no rule in the Senate by which we can limit debate, they can discuss the Tariff bill till the first day of the next session, and they intend to do it unless we will bargain with them not to take up the Elections bill. This is the dilemma: How can we avoid it?

The newspapers say, "Change the rules so as to cut off debate." Then the question arises, "Can we change our rules?" In answering this it must be understood that we have ten majority in the Senate, that a working quorum is forty-three, that we have one Senator (Stanford) in Europe, two Senators at home sick, and so sick that it is questionable whether they could come here, and some Senators—variously reckoned at from three to six—who are openly opposed to the passage of any elections law and who consequently would not consent to a change of rules when every one knows that the object of such change is the passage of an elections law. Again, we have some Senators who don't believe there ought to be any limitation of debate in the Senate, who at the same time are heartily in favor of an elections bill; and others who on a final vote

would vote for the Elections bill, but doubt its expediency so much that they would join with its opponents in opposing a change of rules.

But suppose this difficulty obviated. The question then is, can we change the rules? The Democrats would then insist on discussing this resolution as they do now the Tariff bill, and they can discuss it just as long as the Tariff bill unless the presiding officer of the Senate, when the discussion had proceeded as long as the Republicans thought it ought, should refuse to recognize any one and put the question. This would be a direct violation of our present rules. It would not be the situation that it was in the House on the adoption of rules, for the House had no rules. Our rules permit debate; and to put the question when any one desires to speak would be an open violation of them; and the presiding officer could not do it successfully unless he had a majority of the Senate at his back to sustain him. He would then be exercising his arbitrary power in the interest of a minority and not of a majority. Can he do that and be sustained by even the Republican sentiment of the country?

If then it be conceded that the rules cannot be changed any easier than the Tariff bill can be passed (I don't concede it, but I think most of the Republican Senators do as a practical question), nothing would be gained by dropping the Tariff bill and going into a heated contest for a change of rules. What then is to be done? Two courses are open, —first, keep at the Tariff bill, fight it out on that line if it takes till the 4th of March, and throw the responsibility of obstruction and delay and possible failure to pass it, on the Democrats. This is what I think we ought to do. But you will observe that no Republican newspaper criticises the Democrats or would be likely to. They criticise the Republican Senators with a sweeping and undiscriminating criticism.

The practical situation leads some Republican Senators who honestly favor an election law as well as those who

are opposed to one to try to bargain for the passage of the Tariff bill, by agreeing to postpone consideration of the Elections bill—and that is the secret of the Quay resolution. They think that the delay and failure to pass a Tariff bill, in working great injury to the business interests of the country, creates dissatisfaction and disaffection among business men, and that it is better to assume that we can't get both and secure the passage of the Tariff bill at any sacrifice—even by an agreement with Democrats which virtually means the abandonment of the Elections bill. I cannot go with them and I will not. I believe if we had spunk and persistence we could pass the Tariff bill; then we could, if we had votes enough, take up the Elections bill and honestly try to pass it. If we failed the responsibility would not be on the Republicans. My plan would involve staying here continuously and honestly trying to do those things which the Republican party in the last election decided should be done. To purchase the passage of the Tariff bill by a bargain with the Democrats which involves the abandonment of the Elections bill, I regard as a weak and cowardly surrender.

If the Republicans of Connecticut and the Republican newspapers of the State would back up those Republican Senators who are trying to carry out the wishes of the Republican party, and attack the Democrats, putting the responsibility of delay and possible failure on them, the situation would not be as embarrassing as it now is. But I ask you if you have seen one word of vigorous criticism in a Connecticut newspaper on the course of the Democrats?

Quay's resolution which indicates the bargain will probably come up on Tuesday, and I presume has Republican votes enough behind it, added to the Democrats, to pass it. But I wash my hands clean of it. It will probably give us a Tariff bill—but acquired at what a sacrifice!

The programme of the Quay Republicans prevailed. The Elections bill went over, the Tariff bill passed the

Senate on September 20th, and on October 1st became a law. The bill as a whole Mr. Platt regarded as a well constructed measure, and he struck powerful blows later in its defence, but he had no great fancy for the reciprocity provision adopted in response to the sentiment aroused by Mr. Blaine in his letter to Senator Frye, flung into the controversy after the bill had passed the House. His opinions in later years were somewhat modified, and, after all, the reciprocity proposed by Mr. Blaine, and limited to the countries of South and Central America in its practical working, was quite a different thing from the reciprocity of the Dingley bill which embraced the commercial nations of the world or the reciprocity which ten years later President McKinley hailed as the handmaid of Protection. It had nothing in common with the arrangement with Cuba which as a matter of national policy and square dealing Senator Platt during the Roosevelt administration was instrumental in bringing about.

Though he did not oppose reciprocity in the Senate he was free in his comments on the newly projected issue.[1]

[1] To A. H. Kellam, of New Haven, he wrote on July 19, 1890, what he called a few "crude and tentative suggestions" on the question which was then just beginning to loom on the political horizon:

"I notice in the Hartford *Post* edited by Porter, a nephew of William Walter Phelps, a little article to the effect that the announcement of Blaine's views on reciprocity and the tariff is taken as an indication that he is a candidate for the Presidency in 1892, and if so would be put there by a phenomenal majority, and all that sort of thing.

"So far as I can learn the Blaine pronunciamento seems to have excited more interest in Connecticut than anywhere else. All this question of reciprocity trades with South America, Cuba, and Canada is by no means a new thing Mr. Blaine has no patent on it any more than he has on the Pan-American Congress which

To Lynde Harrison, of New Haven, for instance, he wrote on August 23d:

I don't know what will be done in the Senate about anything looking to what is called "reciprocity"—a very taking and very indefinite word. And I am a little afraid

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was strongly recommended by Cleveland, and earlier than that by Mr. Frye. If anything is done looking to trades with other countries on sugar, it won't take the line of keeping the present duty on sugar; and it seems a very queer position for protectionists or free traders to take, that they would keep up the high duty on sugar in the hope that some time or other we might make a trade with some country that produces a little, when the sugar duty is one that is not required upon any principle of protection and when taking it off is a direct benefit to the people of the United States of fifty millions of dollars.

"To my mind the only way to reach such a reciprocity, or rather trade with a sugar-producing country, would be to take the duty off sugar, and then provide that at a certain time, say July, 1891, or January, 1892, it should be restored as against all sugar-producing countries that have not in the meantime signified their willingness and agreement to take certain things from us free. Then the people would get the benefit of free sugar, and we would hold out an inducement to sugar-producing countries to take some goods free from us. In other words, we have the game in our own hands, when if we keep the duty on sugar in the hope that we may trade with them, they will have the game in their hands.

"The whole question of trades of this sort is more complicated than it appears. In the first place, if a sugar-producing country—Brazil or Cuba—has a treaty with foreign countries containing a 'most favored nations' clause, any agreement they might make with us would have to be made with all other countries with whom they have such treaties. In the second place there is no telling if we should enter upon such a policy, where it would end. The parties who want to make sugar trades say that there is no principle involved in it—it is merely a business arrangement. But if we begin, for instance, with Brazil on sugar, the demand will immediately be made that we shall extend it to wool with the countries that produce coarser wools. That you see hits the wool producers of the United States, with the probable effect of turning them against the protective policy of the country.

"Again, if we make such trades with reference to sugar and wool, why not with reference to tea? The whole western coast that can

of it because every Democrat and Free Trader in the country is shouting for it and for Blaine. But the real difficulty is, first,—to apply it to sugar and not to wool and hides; secondly,—to agree on what articles we shall trade for it. When the Mexican and Spanish treaties were made it turned out that Connecticut got nothing; that is, nothing

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trade with China, perhaps on better terms than any foreign nation, would insist that we should put a duty on tea, if China did not agree to take certain American products.

"Again, what products shall we insist shall be taken free by countries from which we want to get goods free? Shall they be confined purely to agricultural products? Or shall we go beyond that in our demands and include—say, agricultural implements? If we include agricultural implements, why not other manufactured products—cotton cloth; and if cotton cloth, why not woollen cloths and machinery? And if machinery, why not carriages? Where is it to end? Would not the producer of articles not included in the trade be greatly dissatisfied? And is not any general policy of extending our trade by stipulations with certain countries, that we will take certain products of theirs free, if they will take certain products of ours free, the beginning of breaking down the protective policy of this country?

"Now I have said enough to outline some of the difficulties which underlie this whole question of reciprocity trades. I mention only a few of them. It is a serious question, and one but little understood. It has a certain fascination about it in the idea that through it we may enlarge our trade with foreign countries. I suppose that the entire purchases of the Central and South American States and Cuba combined, amount to perhaps five hundred millions of dollars. We could not expect to get it all; but if we could, it would probably equal in round numbers seven per cent. of our home trade. If we could get these reciprocity trades with the western nations lying south of us it might add to our trade an amount equal to two or three per cent. of our home market.

"The question then comes to this—whether it will be worth what it will cost. I have never been quite satisfied on this point. But I am clearly satisfied that Blaine's idea of keeping up the duty on sugar, in the hope that we may be able to make a trade some time, is not sound. If anything is to be done, it is to take off the duty and then provide for a restoration of it as against those countries which in a specified time do not allow us reciprocal advantages such as we may require.

manufactured in Connecticut was included in the list of what those countries would take in consideration of our taking some of their products free; third,—it would give a great boom to the idea of Canadian reciprocity, which is all against New England interests, especially our agricultural interests along the border. And yet I think the drift is toward a provision that if by a certain time the countries raising sugar do not accept free from us certain things that the President shall ask that the duties shall be restored. We got nothing when we made coffee and tea free. I am afraid of it—afraid it will be the beginning of the end of the protective system. It is very fascinating as I have said, but we never made a reciprocity treaty yet by which we did not lose.

Reciprocity and all, the McKinley bill had a rough time when it came to be passed on by the people. While the bill was on its passage through Congress the Democratic opposition was busily engaged in fanning into flame the discontent which is an invariable accompaniment of every revision of the tariff. The cry went up that the new rates of duty were prohibitive; that the bill was framed in the interest of the rich as against the poor; that the workingman's dinner pail was heavily taxed; that the burden pressed cruelly upon the family of moderate means. Merchants all over the United States in every city and village arbitrarily raised the price on every kind of commodity, feeling that they could safely charge the increased cost to the increased rates of the McKinley bill. In numerous instances the bill was held responsible for the increase in retail price of articles which were in no way affected by it. The women of the country, influenced in their shopping by the outcry against the McKinley rates, joined in it, to the consternation of political leaders. The Repub-

lican party was charged with reimbursing campaign contributions out of the pockets of the people; and to swell the cry, the Democrats South and North bayed lustily against the proposed Federal Elections law, which, borrowing a political epithet of the Grant administration, they had dubbed the "Force bill." The McKinley bill was so late in becoming a law that in the few weeks preceding election its real character could not be made known and the long session of Congress kept Senators and Representatives in Washington, where they could not explain it to their constituents. The result might have been foreseen. The Republican majority in the House was overturned and for the last half of Mr. Harrison's administration a Democratic majority of almost unprecedented size helped to thwart his plans.

Mr. Platt was not politically blind, and he recognized, as did others, the tendency of the time, but he sturdily refused to be swept off his feet by popular clamor and up to the very end he contended stoutly that the McKinley bill carried a message of promise to American industries.

Republican defeat in the November elections did not discourage him. It was in the winter of 1890–91 that his own re-election was pending, but fortunately there was no Republican opposition to his return and he was free to go his own way politically.

To a Connecticut member of the House who had asked his advice about a speech he had in contemplation the following winter after the defeat in the November election, Mr. Platt wrote on December 3, 1890:

Of course I don't want to influence you against what you think is right and proper ground to take at the board

of trade meeting. I don't believe free lumber and free coal would help us a particle. As you say, taking half of the duty off of pine lumber has raised the price of it. I don't think the taking off of the whole duty would decrease the price at all, either on pine or spruce. It would simply add so much to Canadian stumpage and to transportation.

We should not buy Nova Scotia coal as against American coal, if it were free. We might possibly get American coal a trifle cheaper, but I doubt that. What I fear is the giving aid and comfort to the Democrats. I do not want them to be encouraged just at present. They will twist anything you say, if it is in the slightest degree favorable to taking the duty off from any raw material into a condemnation of the whole protective policy, just as they did what Blaine said about reciprocity. The first step in the Democratic free trade programme is free trade on what they call raw materials, and, if they can get any one to advocate that, even as to any one item, they immediately claim a convert to their doctrine. We have trouble enough on hand, and my idea is that we had better not show any weakening anywhere along the line whatever we might think it best to do in the future.

To the end of his career he never wavered in his faith.

CHAPTER XIX

THE WILSON-GORMAN BILL

An Aid to the Finance Committee—Mr. North's Experience—Active in Debate—Keen Analysis of the Democratic Position—"Incidental Protection" Ridiculed—A Deadly Blow at Farmers—Opposed to Free Raw Materials.

THE McKinley tariff was doomed to a life altogether too brief to demonstrate its effectiveness as a protective and revenue-raising measure, and its existence was confined to a period of political uncertainty which placed it continually at a disadvantage, so that its real merit as a piece of constructive legislation will never be known. The Democratic party, which got its foot into the stirrup in the elections of 1890, vaulted into the saddle two years later, and, having made its campaign on the issue of the tariff, felt compelled at least to attempt a fulfilment of its promise.

In the abortive tariff legislation of the Fifty-third Congress, in 1894, resulting as it did in the hybrid Wilson-Gorman act which President Cleveland stigmatized as a work of "perfidy and dishonor," Mr. Platt, as one of the minority in the Senate, was obliged to participate. He was not a member of the Finance Committee, although he probably would have been, had there been a Republican majority, as Mr. Hiscock's retirement from the Senate had left a vacancy among the Eastern members of the Committee to which

Connecticut might reasonably have laid claim. But although not a member he was taken freely into the councils of the minority members, and certain schedules of the proposed bill were turned over to him for consideration. An interesting light is thrown on his methods of work by S. N. D. North, afterwards director of the census, who came closely in contact with him at this time:

I shall never forget the occasion of my first meeting with Senator Platt. I was assisting Senator Aldrich as a tariff expert. Senator Platt sent for me. He said:

"I want to know all about the woollen schedule. At present I know very little about it. I wish you would help me out."

We sat down in his room at the Arlington, and he began asking me questions. I never went through so searching a cross examination in my life. There was not a detail of the schedule that he did not want to know all about. Finally I was compelled to cry for mercy. I discovered that the thorough information which he had in mind to get was something which I was not in a position to give without further preparation, so I begged for time to look into the question a little more at my leisure, and then I went back to him. He resumed his cross examination and I did the best I could. What particularly impressed me was his evident determination to get at the truth; the real reason for every item of the woollen schedule, and the clearness of his mental powers. He had a marvellous memory. When the bill came up for discussion every question he asked showed that the knowledge I had helped him to obtain stood in his mind.

It was like him to debate more freely the Wilson–Gorman bill to which he was opposed than any one of the measures which he favored, and in the framing of some of which he had an important part. He was

satisfied that the various paragraphs of the McKinley and Dingley bill should be put on their passage without controversial contribution from him, but there was so much in the Wilson–Gorman schedules to which he took exception that he threw himself into the combat, delivering effective blows where they would do most good. It was an opportunity for exposing the fallacies of the Democratic position which few others were so well qualified to take advantage of as he. His familiarity with industries and schedules and his forceful unadorned manner of speech rarely came into more effective play. Of his work it was said at the time by a Connecticut newspaper:

Never before has Senator Platt so revealed his strength of mind, his capacity for labor, his equipment for debate, his sound moral basis, his warm heart, his true regard for the common people and his lofty patriotism. . . . Sound judgment, common sense, ready wit, pat and luminous illustrations have abounded in his speeches and made them wise, interesting, and forcible. . . . He has especially pleaded for the people of New England, and in doing it he has shown much of the sturdy, strongly moral, deeply thoughtful, shrewd humorous qualities that mark the New England character. In our opinion no man in the Senate has done so much work in this debate or done it so well.

In advocating a duty of sixty cents a ton on coal instead of forty as recommended by the committee, he said:

I wish the Democratic Free Trader could get the one idea into his mind as to what a benefit it is to the country to have all our work done here, what a benefit it is to have our wool grown here, and our ore dug here, and our coal mined here, rather than to have it done somewhere else. I should suppose that the underlying patriotism of American

Senators would get the better of their party predilections and party pride, so that they would not put into the bill anything which would strike down industries in this country.

I stand for the system of protection because I will not desert the American laborer. I have no special right to call myself his champion, and I believe that the continuance of all these industries in the United States by American labor is the salvation of our civilization, and it is for that reason that I am a protectionist. No supposed sentiment that we could get coal a little cheaper in New England will for a moment turn me from the plain, straight path of protection, which a man who acts from principle and not from selfish aims ought to pursue.

The Wilson bill as it came from the House had at least the virtue of consistency. It was a genuine tariff-for-revenue measure. Protective duties had been ruthlessly slaughtered. By the time it had come from under its treatment at the hands of the Senate Committee it had lost even this merit. Higher duties had been restored here and there at the demand of Democratic Senators interested in certain industries until the original measure was hardly recognizable. But the remodelling had not been in accordance with any economic plan. Mr. Platt declared the difference between the two bills to be like the difference between electrocution and death by slow poison:

The one is sudden and painless as the death of industries would have been under the Wilson bill; the other is torturing and lingering as the death of industries will be under the bill which we are now considering, should it become a law. . . .

This is not a protective bill. It is not in any sense a recognition of the doctrine of protection high or low. It is not a bill for revenue with incidental protection. It is

a bill (and the truth may as well be told in the Senate of the United States) which proceeds upon free-trade principles except as to such articles as it has been necessary to levy protective duties upon to get the votes of Democratic Senators to pass the bill. I insist that never before in the history of this country has such a spectacle been presented in either branch of the National Legislature, and I pray to God it may never occur again.

The bill as it came from the House of Representatives was mainly free from such a charge, but reaching here it was discovered that there was not a majority upon the Democratic side of the chamber to pass it. There was a body of Conservatives, as they were called, estimated at from five to fifteen, who were charged all over the country in Democratic newspapers with being traitors to the Democratic party, and in great head-lines Democratic newspapers called upon the Democrats in the Senate who stood by the Chicago platform and proposed to pass a tariff bill, which should not be objectionable to the charge that it was robbery, to read the Conservatives out of the party. It was more of a task than the majority of the Democratic Senators desired to undertake. Consequently they surrendered to these conservatives, and the price of their votes appears in the protective duties which the bill contains; and there are no other protective duties in it. . . .

It is strange, passing strange, that Senators who say they do not believe in protection, that Senators who say that the McKinley bill was the most infamous measure that was ever passed, should be found voting for duties equivalent to the McKinley rates upon some of those matters which most closely touch and affect the interests of the people of the United States. No such marvel has ever been seen under the sun as all the Democratic Senators, with the possible exception of the Senator from Texas (Mr. Mills), giving way to this demand of the sugar trust. How this chamber has rung with denunciations of the sugar trust! How the ears of waiting and listening multitudes in

Democratic political meetings have been vexed with reiterated denunciations of this sugar trust! And here every Democratic Senator, with one exception, is ready to vote for a prohibitive duty upon refined sugar!

He ridiculed the idea of "incidental protection" which Democrats looking for an excuse to impose duties on their own pet products made much of. He declared that there was no such principle:

If by incidental protection you mean that the metal working industries of Connecticut and the other Eastern States are to be absolutely slaughtered and destroyed by the bill and that the sugar trust is to have a prohibitive duty upon refined sugar, you will find plenty of it in the bill; but I had not supposed that was the doctrine of the Democratic party. If you would make duties all along the bill protective, there would be no "incidental" protection in it; it would be "deliberate" protection. If you reduce the duties all along the bill below the protective point, there will be no "incidental" protection. You cannot so construct a bill; it is impossible. You might as well attempt to have two and two make five as to construct a bill upon the principle that you will impose duties for revenue, which, while they do not protect, carry incidental protection with them.

He turned against the majority their own argument that the American consumer pays the protective tariff tax. It was estimated that the bill carried a reduction of thirty-one per cent. in duties. Then, from the standpoint of a tariff reformer, he pointed out the value of all goods on hand at the time the bill was to take effect would be reduced thirty-one per cent.—practically one third. It might be all very well to punish the manufacturers but why punish the merchants? In the denunciation of protection he had never heard anything

about the "robber merchant." It had always been the "robber manufacturer" upon whose head the vials of wrath had been poured.

The proposed legislation he declared to be a crime. On the eighth day of November, 1892, every man in the United States who was willing to work could find employment at remunerative wages. The "army of peace" was better fed, better clothed, better housed than the workingmen of any other nation or of any previous time:

Now, the very threat of the passage of this bill has changed all. The men who are coming to the capital of the United States to present petitions—if they are as represented to be, peaceful and peaceable citizens, not tramps or vagrants, "Coxey's Army"—are men who on the eighth day of November, 1892, were at work at good wages, and the very threat of the passage of this bill, among other dire results, has reduced them to the condition of the unemployed. I say that to adopt a policy which throws the citizens of the Republic into necessary idleness is a crime; and no greater crime can be devised against the Republic than that. . . .

I would not indulge in class legislation. I do not believe under our Constitution and under our system that we can provide work directly by the Government for the citizen who is unemployed; but I do believe that when two systems of finance are presented to the country, and one of them will give employment at remunerative wages to all our people, and the other will deprive our people of work and force them into the great army of the unemployed, it is not only folly, but criminality, which adopts that system which must fill the streets of our cities and the highways of our agricultural community with idle men who have no means of support. . . .

We managed from 1890 to 1893 to keep all our people

employed; we furnished work even for those who came from foreign countries to these shores to better their condition; but when we adopt a bill, the purpose of which and the avowed object of which is to buy goods in foreign countries, because, as is supposed, they can be bought cheaper there than here, then we displace so much labor in this country. It is no longer a question of whether wages are to be kept at their present standard or to be reduced; it is a question what is to be done with the men who want to perform the work which others are performing in other countries when they find no demand for their labor in this country.

When he came to the discussion of the wool schedule he suggested another line of thought. He declared that the tactics of the free trader from the beginning had been, first, to bribe the manufacturer of woollen goods with the idea of free wool and protected manufacture of woollen goods, and then, when that had been accomplished, to excite the hostility of the wool grower and the farmer against the manufacturer. The first proposition of that plan involved the idea that the manufacturer of woollen goods could be bribed.

He pointed out that the pending bill seemed to strike its deadliest blow at the farmers all around. It was not wool alone which was slaughtered; but there was to be free wheat, free corn, free rye, free oats, a reduction of one half of the duty on hay, the largest crop in the United States, and innumerable reductions below the protective point upon the products of the farm:

Why is it? Is the farmer the "robber"? Is the farmer the "robber baron"? Is he the "greedy monopolist"? Is he the man who is plundering the people? There is but one reason for it; there is but one explanation of the policy

of the bill, and that I have already given. It is, strike the farmer first, then arouse his hostility against the protected industries in the country.

I said that the woollen manufacturer of New England was not to be purchased by that bribe, and was not to be caught by that bait. I have too much faith in the agriculturist of the country to believe that he will fall into the trap which has been set by the free traders. There is no reason why this should be done. No excuse can be given for it. If a revenue tariff is the doctrine of the Democratic party, there is no article upon which a revenue duty could be more properly imposed than upon wool. If a revenue duty with incidental protection be the doctrine of the Democratic party, there is no article upon which an incidentally protective duty could be more properly levied than upon wool. This proposition is without excuse, wicked and monstrous, throwing away the revenue which is derived from this article, and which ought to be derived from it, upon a pretended benefit to the consumer of woollen goods.

After the Senate by a vote of 46 to 4 had defeated Senator Peffer's motion to put iron on the free list,—only one Democrat, Hill of New York, voting in the affirmative,—Mr. Platt moved to increase the rate from 40 cents to 60 cents a ton. He made his amendment the text for a short sermon on the attitude of New England:

I move this amendment because I am a protectionist, and because I wish to vote for protective duties for all industries. As a New England man, since there has been so much said in this discussion about our desiring in New England to secure protective duties for ourselves with alleged indifference to the other industries of the country, I do not wish to let that suggestion pass without notice. We mine no iron ore to speak of in New England. There

is a little mined in one county in my State, a little in Berkshire County, Massachusetts, and a very little in Maine, but the production of iron ore in New England is so small that it cuts no figure in the great production of iron ore in this country.

We have been told that New England is for free coal, free iron ore, and free wool. If I know the sentiment of New England and the New England manufacturers, the New England workingman and the New England merchants do not desire or ask for free raw materials, as they are called in this respect. We do not want free iron ore; we do not want free coal, and we do not want free wool, for the reason that we are protectionists, and we desire that there shall be extended to every industry in the United States, whether it be mining, farming, or manufacturing, the same protection which we believe to be good for our own industries in New England.

We believe in protection as a system; we believe that every industry in the United States carried on by American labor needs such protection as will enable it to fairly compete with the industries carried on by the laborers of other countries, and we propose to stand by it no matter what its immediate effect may be upon the particular industries in our section.

Impotent though the Fifty-third Congress was, it contrived to send the Tariff bill to the White House through the abject surrender of the majority in the House of Representatives in accepting the Senate schedules without amendment. President Cleveland allowed the bill to become a law without his signature, but the Wilson-Gorman act was branded at its birth. Even before its passage, it was recognized that the party which framed it and forced it upon a reluctant Executive was doomed; that the House of Representatives to be chosen in the following November would

have a Republican majority, and that in all probability the President and Congress to be chosen two years later would be Republican, thus insuring a speedy substitution for the Wilson-Gorman act of a consistent protective tariff.

CHAPTER XX

THE DINGLEY TARIFF

A Member of the Finance Committee—A Controlling Factor in Tariff Legislation—Attitude toward the Reciprocity Clauses—A Strong Advocate of Administration Policies.

AS a sequence to the extraordinary exhibition of legislative imbecility afforded by the Fifty-third Congress, the House of Representatives in the Fifty-fourth Congress, elected in 1894, was Republican by a majority which nobody had ventured to predict. Two years later William McKinley, the "Advance Agent of Prosperity," was nominated for President by a great majority, mainly because he stood in the popular mind emphatically as the representative of those issues which were the antithesis of the issues which for four years had spelled financial upheaval and distress, free soup-houses, and idle mills. He was elected by a majority equally striking, because in spite of Mr. Bryan and the free-silver diversion the Republican party, under his leadership, was known to stand for protection and prosperity.

The first task set for the new administration was to place on the statute-books a tariff act which should embody the protective principle, and a special session of Congress was called for that purpose to meet immediately after the inauguration. In anticipation of the special session, the Ways and Means Committee

of the House, of which Mr. Dingley of Maine was Chairman, spent the entire winter of 1896–7 in framing a bill to be laid before Congress as speedily as possible after its assembling. In due season this bill went over to the other end of the Capitol there to meet the remodelling which is the fate of every revenue measure. Mr. Platt had been placed upon the Finance Committee at the beginning of the Fifty-fourth Congress as soon as the Republicans secured control of the Senate, and at the beginning of the Fifty-fifth Congress he was the fourth member of the Committee in seniority, outranked only by the venerable Chairman, Morrill of Vermont, Allison, and Aldrich. Other Republican members were Wolcott of Colorado, Burrows of Michigan, Jones of Nevada. It was the understanding that Aldrich, Allison, and Platt were to pull the laboring oars. Their duty was to understand the proposed bill, schedule by schedule, to defend it on the floor of the Senate, and to act as managers for the Senate in the conference between the two Houses. Mr. Platt went at this work with his accustomed thoroughness. Even while the bill was under consideration by the House, he and his associates on the Committee were conducting their own inquiries and tentatively framing their own schedules. Russell of Connecticut was a member of the Ways and Means Committee, as useful at one end of the Capitol as Platt was at the other. The two men were the closest of friends and they worked together in effective harmony.

Whenever a Connecticut manufacturer applied to either Senator or Representative for help he was likely to be cross-questioned in a way to convince him of the advisability of knowing his own business, as when a New Milford man received the following:

In talking with Mr. Russell I find that he would be glad to be more fully informed as to the nature and extent of your business. One who has a proposition to make in regard to a duty upon any article needs to be fully informed. Will you therefore kindly state the uses to which this material is put when manufactured, and the proportions of its use—that is, what proportion of it may be used for a porcelain, for pottery, and for other things? Do the three words "quartz," "silica," and "flint" mean the same thing, or are they different materials? How are they used when ground? Are they mixed with clay and earths and kaolin? What foreign article comes in competition with them? It is not easy for one not familiar with the business to see how black pebbles come in competition with white quartz. What should a duty be placed upon? What language should be used in order to cover all the materials or products that come in competition with this?

I think you will appreciate how fully and particularly one has to know these things in order to frame language which will be suitable for the purpose intended, or to know in what class of articles of the bill as hitherto read the new articles subject to duty should be placed; and then how much is invested in the business in this country approximately? What is the value of the product here? How much have importations been? What is the value of the raw material and of the finished product? Where is the raw material produced—anywhere except in the western part of our State, and where do the things which come in competition with it come from—what countries? These are some of the questions which it is necessary for any one considering the matter to be quite thoroughly informed about. Have you any suggestions to make as to the particular language which ought to be employed in a bill to effect the object you desire? All these and other questions which will readily suggest themselves to you I hope you may be able to answer.

He was continually in correspondence with many men from many States, was occupied practically every waking hour for many weeks in committee or in conference, was in his seat in the Senate constantly while the Tariff bill was under consideration, was as potential as any other man in shaping the Dingley bill, and yet in the whole course of the debate he did not make a single speech of even moderate length. He answered questions, gave information in regard to the most complicated of the schedules, was watchful, helpful, industrious, invaluable, but although he was on his feet scores of times, he did not indulge in a flight of oratory for home consumption. The nearest approach to it was when a Democratic Senator asked him if the foreigner paid the tax, and tempted him to reply:

I must ask to be excused from entering into a discussion of the principles upon which the protective system is based. Unfortunately the Senators who would like to explain it fully and at great length, and answer the very remarkable and wonderful statements which have been made on the other side for the last three or four weeks, are compelled to sit still in order to secure the passage of the pending bill within any time that will satisfy the country.

Business interests everywhere were pressing Congress to get the new law into operation, not only because the discussion of any tariff bill leaves commerce in a state of uncertainty, but because the country was for having the Wilson-Gorman act wiped off the statute-books with the least possible delay. Mr. Platt sympathized with this feeling, and yet he appreciated the importance of making haste slowly with legislation which was so vitally to affect the welfare of the country. He was ready to devote many weeks to the consideration of

the bill. This feeling he expressed in writing to Charles Hopkins Clark, while the bill was still in the House:

I saw a long editorial in the Hartford *Courant* with reference to the duty on books. I think that was one of the items which probably received very little consideration, owing to the haste which was supposed to be necessary by the Committee in completing its consideration of the Tariff bill so as to get it before the new Congress at its opening, and that a mistake was made in that as in many other matters, by reason of the supposed necessity of immediate action. I think there is no doubt that it will be corrected, by the House probably, if not, then by the Senate. I presume that the same pressure for the passage of the bill quickly will be brought to bear upon the Senate, and I simply want to excuse, in advance, any seeming delay which may occur there by saying that the demand for the passage of "a" bill is all well enough, but we cannot afford to pass an ill-considered bill. If we did, the country in six months' time would be blaming us a good deal more than it will if we take time for careful investigation. In the House nothing is considered, but is put through arbitrarily. In the Senate, some one must be ready to give a reason for every rate of duty, for every classification, and to explain the scope and effect of every use of language.

To that task he devoted himself. The Dingley bill remained in the Senate from April 1st, to July 7th, a period of over three months, and he was on duty with Mr. Aldrich and Mr. Allison all that time, laboring often far into the night. The end crowned the work; for a measure was finally enacted under which the industries of the country were to thrive to a degree beyond the dreams of those who framed it, and which is now acknowledged, after twelve years of practical test, to have been the most scientific tariff bill ever constructed.

He not only supported the reciprocity clauses of the

Dingley law, but, after the law had gone into effect and Mr. Kasson by direction of President McKinley and Secretary Hay had negotiated treaties accordingly with various countries, he sustained the administration in its attempt to secure ratification of the treaties in the Senate. It was not an easy thing for him to do, and he seems to have given the matter considerable thought before making up his mind. In writing in December, 1899, about the French treaty he said:

I am inclined to think that the sentiment of the Senate with regard to reciprocity treaties is still in an unsettled condition. Of course every Senator is being urged, by some one who thinks that his business is going to be more or less injured, to oppose the treaty on that ground, but I do not think that it is going to be looked at from such a narrow standpoint as that. The broader view is the one which ought to be taken, and that is whether the reciprocity treaties, on the whole, will be beneficial to the United States or otherwise, and I think that there has been more prospective opposition to the French treaty created by the publications which have come from Paris than in any other way. The French Government, to overcome the opposition to the treaty there, seems to have allowed a statement to go out that the French negotiators won a great advantage for France over the United States by the treaty, and people who do not understand the matter very well, whether they are Senators or business men, are likely to say that if that is so we do not want the treaty. I do not know how many things Kasson gave away at the last in order to get the treaty signed, but I know he gave a good many, and some of them hurt. Still a man who is himself a fractional element, even though it be a small fractional element, of the treaty-making power, ought to look at such agreements without prejudice and not be governed by minor considerations.

I really do not feel quite settled myself about this matter. It all turns, in my mind, upon the question of whether we have obtained fair equivalents for the concessions we are making. From the standpoint of a man who is making a bargain, we might, however, afford to give away something if we were sure of bringing about pleasant, mutual, and satisfactory relations between ourselves and France. In other words, good-will would be worth paying something for, if you could rely upon a Frenchman's good-will, but, as I say, I have not yet any decided convictions or opinions in regard to this French treaty. I have been waiting rather to understand it more fully than I do. It went to the Committee on Foreign Relations, and I suppose, although I do not know that I am right, that when they have heard Mr. Kasson's explanation of the treaty they are likely in some way to ask information and advice of the Finance Committee, and I suppose that when that time comes I could get a little more intelligent idea of the situation here. I have been holding my mind in a receptive state. I do not think that there has been much talk about it among Senators. I do not think that any political feeling has developed, and I imagine that a good many of the Senators are in my state of mind about it—that is, that they want to ratify it unless we have so decidedly the worst of it in the treaty that we ought not to do it. I do not think that the doctrine of protection is very much involved in it, though I am and have been a protectionist, because I believed in the doctrine. But protection and reciprocity have not been thought to be incompatible, and I am quite sure that there are a good many articles on which we have allowed reductions that were somewhat over-protected in the Dingley bill.

The duty on fruits was forced upon us, but later, like a good many other articles, parties engaged in producing them could stand a reasonable reduction of the duty without practical loss. In some instances, either from intention or because our commissioner had to agree in order to get

any treaty at all, there have been reductions which will be somewhat harmful.

I do not know where I may finally bring up on it. My opinion is that I shall be for the treaty, although Connecticut people suppose that they are hit all along the line.

CHAPTER XXI

FREE CUBA

Opposed to Recognition of Belligerency—Tries to Prevent War—Pleads for Moderation—A Pillar of Conservatism—A Strong Aid to the Administration—Growth of the War Sentiment—Destruction of the *Maine*—The President's Message—Adoption of Resolutions for Intervention—In a Small Minority—Hostilities Precipitated.

IN the spring of 1895 a situation developed in Cuba which was to exert a far-reaching influence upon the future of the United States, and which called into play, before its course was run, the highest powers of American public men. The insurrection which was precipitated by the landing of José Marti in February, 1895, rapidly assumed proportions setting it apart from the many uprisings with which the "ever faithful Isle" had been infested at intervals for seventy years. In six months the insurgents had taken possession of Santiago and of all the rural districts as far west as Havana—more than had been accomplished in the entire course of the "ten years' war" which had ended twenty years before. Sympathy in the United States, aroused by constantly increasing newspaper exploitation of the gallant struggle for liberty going on so near our shores, became acute as the session of Congress of 1895–6 approached. There was an insistent demand that the sentiment of the American people should find voice at Washington. President Cleveland and Secre-

tary Olney were opposed to any action; and the attention of the Cuban sympathizers was turned to Congress. Many resolutions were introduced—some declaring for the immediate recognition of independence, some embodying a recognition of belligerency, others declaring for intervention, still others for neutrality. Senator Platt felt that Congress for the time at least should keep hands off. He regarded the recognition of belligerency as a matter primarily for the Executive branch of the Government. The position which he assumed was far from popular. The trend of sentiment everywhere was unmistakably toward the recognition of the insurgents. Yellow journals were inflaming the public mind and Connecticut was no less Cuban-mad than other States. Mr. Platt's re-election to the Senate was pending. Ambitious rivals were watching their opportunity. But he did not care what effect his attitude might have on his personal fortunes. He did not shrink from the issue. On January 16, 1896, he said in the Senate:

> Recognition of the insurgents as belligerents is not a matter which is due to them; but it is a question which pertains solely to the interests of the United States. If a proclamation of neutrality were issued . . . it would be considered, and justly considered under international law, as an unfriendly act to the parent Government. . . . We in this country sympathize naturally with every people that is seeking to establish a republican form of government; but I think that we ought not to rush hastily into a matter of according belligerent rights to such a people. We ought to observe the rules which have been laid down by international comity with reference to such matters. I should be very sorry to see any resolution passed here which in any way would indicate that the President of the United States and the State Department were not doing all that

that branch of the Government ought to do with reference to the conflict now pending in a neighboring foreign country.

He felt that Congress could not with propriety go beyond a declaration of sympathy unless it intended frankly to declare war. Resolutions were adopted by House and by Senate, one declaring that the United States ought to be neutral, the other that the United States ought to intervene. The Senate managers of the Conference Committee recommended that the Senate abandon its own resolutions and adopt those passed by the House. Senator Platt urged that the report of the Conference Committee be disagreed to, and on March 23, 1896, as expressing the real sentiment of the Senate, he submitted the following:

Resolved, That the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring) hereby expresses its earnest desire and hope that Cuba may soon become a free, independent, and republican government, and that the friendly offices of the United States should be offered by the President to the Spanish Government to secure such result.

That he thought deeply on this subject is shown by his correspondence. Writing on March 7, 1896, to Gen. E. S. Greeley of New Haven, he said:

I have a very decided feeling that we are letting our sympathy run away with our judgment, and yet it is undeniable, I think, that Spain has treated its colony of Cuba with more harshness than has ever been shown by a parent country to such a colony; has taxed them heavily without representation, and has been severe and almost brutal in its treatment. Then General Weyler's published orders seem to indicate a barbarous and cruel spirit in the matter of conducting the war against rebels, or patriots, whichever they may be. Under such circumstances it is

almost impossible not to sympathize with the people of Cuba if they are in good faith and earnestly striving to throw off Spanish authority and establish free government. To what extent this condition of things exists it is almost impossible to ascertain. Reports are very conflicting and, as I believe, so exaggerated on both sides that we don't know the truth of the situation. I have not believed that there was a case outside of the ground of sympathy for the recognition of the insurgents as belligerents, and yet I am inclined to think that I would vote a resolution of sympathy.

A few days later, on March 12th, he wrote to A. D. Osborne of New Haven:

I do not propose to vote for the Cuban resolutions in their present form, and if I get the opportunity shall state my reasons therefor.

On March 14th, he wrote to Rev. E. P. Parker of Hartford:

It has been understood here, at least since January, that I did not believe in the foolishness which prevails with regard to Cuba. I send you from the *Record* of the sixteenth of January a few words that I said; I don't suppose they had much influence, but they indicate what I thought of the subject at that time. A strange thing in all this discussion is that the Committee on Foreign Relations does not seem to have examined the law or the facts with regard to Cuba, at least they have not referred to the law and have been quite chary as to the facts. Probably we cannot stop the passage of these resolutions, but we will get enough votes against them as they now stand to show quite a conservative element, and I intend, some time before the debate closes, to make my position known.

On March 16th, he wrote to H. Wales Lines:

If I get a chance at Cuba, I am going to say that it is quite proper for Congress to express its desire that Cuba

should become a government, republican in form and spirit, but at that Congress ought to stop; that we ought not to recognize belligerency, because there is no warrant for it in the conditions existing in Cuba considered with reference to the rules of international law for a hundred years, and our own position frequently and vigorously stated; and that above all it is entirely wrong to talk about intervention on account of the proximity of Cuba or the loss which people of the United States may be sustaining in the way of trade. If what I say shall be unpopular, I cannot help it. I shall at least try to make my position clear and then must take the verdict of the people upon it.

To Franklin Farrell of Ansonia, he wrote on March 30th:

I should be very glad to see free government established in Cuba, but I don't think that the United States ought to go to war with Spain to secure that end, or depart from its established policy in dealing with foreign nations.

The resolutions finally adopted after much debate and conference declared that a state of war existed in Cuba, that the United States would observe strict neutrality, and that the President should offer the good offices of the United States with the Spanish Government to secure the recognition of the independence of the island.

As might have been expected, this declaration had no effect. The insurrection continued, likewise the agitation in the United States. It was the year of the Presidential election. Both great political parties at their national conventions passed resolutions of sympathy with Cuba.

A Republican President and House of Representatives were elected by great majorities, and in the winter preceding the inauguration of President McKinley the

Cuban question became still more acute. The Committee on Foreign Relations, through Senator Cameron of Pennsylvania, on December 21, 1896, reported a brief resolution recognizing the republic of Cuba. It was accompanied by a voluminous report. The business community was agitated. Stocks went tumbling. Secretary Olney came out in an interview in which he declared that President Cleveland would pay no attention to the joint resolution, even if it passed Congress over the veto; because the right of recognition pertained solely to the Executive, and the resolution would be only the expression of opinion of "certain eminent gentlemen." In the closing hours of the administration it was not thought well to force such an issue and so the resolution slumbered on the calendar.

Senator Platt was greatly exercised by this agitation in Congress and among the people. It seemed to him that the United States was being thoughtlessly forced into a position where war with Spain would be inevitable. On December 18, 1895, we find him writing to Isaac H. Bromley of the New York *Tribune* as follows:

> Your articles in the *Tribune* about Cuba are in accord with my judgment. But if the sober, thoughtful business interests of the country don't want a resolution passed through Congress recognizing "the independence of the republic of Cuba" they must speak out and speak quickly and loudly. This false devotion to the cause of liberty, the uneasiness which prevails, and the desire for patriotic notoriety is acting and reacting on members of the Senate and House who are usually level-headed, and things are being worked up to a frenzy that is sweeping such men off their feet. It seems to be pretty much understood that our Senate Committee on Foreign Relations is going to report such

a resolution, and if it does, the great probability now is that it would pass the Senate. It is hard to stem the water when the dam breaks away. There is no republic of Cuba, and the people there who claim there is have not established their independence any more than the Armenians have theirs in Turkey. The newspaper rot about what is going on there, though published one day and contradicted the next, seems to stir up all the aggressive spirit in the minds of the people, and the Cuban junta or legation, or whatever it is called, is active and pestiferous in circulating its views of the situation. It is a case of Naboth's vineyard. Men whose love of humanity was not fluttered when in Texas about a year ago a negro was covered with kerosene oil and burned to death on a public platform in the presence of 7000 yelling people, are shedding tears over the sad fate of Maceo. So I repeat what I said in the first place, that if those who do not want a war with Spain (because if we recognize an independence which does not exist, we ought to go and establish it and should probably be forced into a war anyway) had better bestir themselves. It is another case like the sound-money sentiment of the country sitting still and allowing silver to be howled in every schoolhouse of the United States without making a reply.

On the following day he wrote to Charles Hopkins Clark, editor of the Hartford *Courant:*

The Foreign Relations Committee is going to report on Monday a resolution recognizing "the independence of the republic of Cuba," and unless people are ready to sit still and see that done without protest, they ought to give expression to their opinions at once.

To Hon. John Birge he wrote:

To pass such a resolution would be mockery and ludicrous if we did not intend by armed force to help the insurgents to achieve the independence which we recognize, though in fact it does not exist. If we pass such a resolution we

ought to send the army and navy there to make independence and a republican government an accomplished fact. And I cannot look upon a question so grave and serious as this from the mere standpoint of sentiment.

The legal and constitutional question involved—as to whether the right of recognition of belligerency did not rest exclusively with the Executive—was one which disturbed even some of those who were favorable to the adoption of unequivocal resolutions, although, as in all such cases where Congress has set its mind on the accomplishment of a certain end, the doubtful constitutionality of the action would not have been permitted to block the path of its legislative purpose. Mr. Platt was one of those who believed the President alone was empowered to recognize belligerency, but there were lawyers, equally distinguished, who held to the contrary opinion.

On December 21st, the day the resolution was reported, he indicated his perplexity in a letter to former Senator George F. Edmunds:

My own view is that, under the Constitution, the matter of dealing with foreign powers and recognizing their sovereignty or the recognition of belligerent rights is committed to the Executive branch, that Congress has never yet attempted to pass any resolutions which did not recognize either in terms, or tacitly, this doctrine, and that all our diplomatic history confirms the understanding of lawyers and statesmen that the power rests alone with the President.

Of course, I have not investigated it as closely on authorities and precedents as a Senator should in order to talk about it, but the claim that the President cannot effectively recognize a foreign power without the aid of Congress is rather embarrassing. He cannot send a minister without

an appropriation for his salary by Congress, so that, as in most of the cases where power is committed to one branch, the concurrence of the other is necessary to make it effective. It is plain to my mind that Congress should not attempt to pass a resolution which assumes to recognize the independence of a revolutionary people, but I am a little troubled about the effect of such action by joint resolution passed over the Presidential veto. It would be an embarrassing situation to say the least, and yet I cannot think that it would operate as such a recognition of the new Government as that the courts in the cases which might arise would hold it to be an accomplished fact.

With the incoming of the new administration there was a lull for a while and then fire broke out afresh with increasing fury. Weyler's system of reconcentration was achieving its cruel ends. Outrages on American citizens—most of them naturalized Cubans—called for redress. President McKinley, more alert than his predecessor, demanded release and redress in the case of every American prisoner, and by the end of April all were released. On May 20, 1897, the Senate without division passed a joint resolution recognizing Cuban belligerency. It went to sleep in the House under Speaker Reed's careful nursing. But just then President McKinley, informed by consular reports that, under the reconcentration system, American citizens as well as natives were being starved to death, sent a special message to Congress asking for $50,000 with which to send supplies to those Americans who were suffering at the hands of Spain. Congress acted immediately. The act was approved May 24, 1897; and, with the consent of Spain, American interference was at last a fact, through the feeding of starving Americans and others in the devastated island. The next six months was a

period of negotiations, of demands and propositions on the part of the United States—of broken promises and procrastinating assurances on the part of Spain. At last the administration determined to send a battleship to Havana for the protection of Americans there. The *Maine* arrived in Havana on January 24, 1898. On February 9, 1898, there appeared the letter of the Spanish Minister in Washington, Señor Dupuy de Lome, written on December 25, 1897, containing coarse and insulting references to President McKinley. Seven days later, on February 16th, while public feeling was still high, came the destruction of the *Maine* in Havana harbor. The smouldering embers of war broke into flame.

Senator Platt, watching with apprehension the growth of national passion, maintained his poise. He was in thorough sympathy with President McKinley in the endeavor to compose all differences without resort to arms, or, if that failed, then to postpone the conflict. He was not for "peace at any price." He was not governed by the protests of "business" and Wall Street against agitation which might unsettle values. He deplored war for its own sake, and looked with dread upon the prospect that the United States would plunge into it and bring all its horror upon the American people. Through these trying times he was an avenue of communication between the Capitol and the White House. His counsel was sought constantly by President McKinley; and his pleas for moderation were listened to respectfully even by the most ardent of those who cried for war. There was a long, tense period of waiting while the Sampson board of inquiry was completing its work, and preparing its report on the cause of the destruction of the *Maine*. After

that report was sent to Congress on March 28th, it was plain to almost everybody that the resources of diplomacy had failed; but up to that time Senator Platt and those who acted with him continued to use their powers of persuasion in what they felt to be an almost hopeless cause. On March 23d, writing to Rev. William B. Carey of North Stonington, Connecticut, he said:

I can understand, I think, how intensely people get wrought up by the anticipation of war. For myself I believe that any relations existing between Spain and the United States are quite susceptible of amicable adjustment and if, as I believe, peace can be brought about in Cuba by peaceful methods by the United States, it would be a great crime to attempt to drive us to bring it about by fighting. It is very well to talk about destroying the Spanish navy. God alone knows whether it would be destroyed, whether it would not destroy us in case of war. Regiments of black soldiers would undoubtedly be good soldiers in Cuba when they were recruited, and organized, and disciplined, but, before that could occur, any emergency for their use would doubtless have passed. No one knows that we would ever get to Cuba if we undertook to send soldiers there, or, if we did get there, having destroyed the Spanish navy, that the necessity for any great number of soldiers would be obviated. I do not see how people contemplate war without horror or talk about it without shuddering, and unless it should appear that the *Maine* was destroyed by Spanish agency, I should not be able to formulate the rules which would justify the passage of a resolution declaring war. The consequences of war cannot be computed in dollars and cents; only in lives, and, if we succeed, what shall we get by it all? It is quite the time now for people to have cool heads. Hot talk should give way to calm judgment and dispassionate utterances. I only say this because I feel that some one must be level-headed now or our nation

will be put in a wrong light in the eyes of the world and in the final judgment of our own conscience.

On March 25th, writing to H. Wales Lines, he said:

The situation here may be described as serious and critical. There is a fear that the radicals in Congress might be able to override the President and pass resolutions which would lead to immediate hostilities, but I think that danger is now past. Certainly I think the Senate will keep still until the President shall say to Congress that he has exhausted all means in his power to provide for closing the contest in Cuba. If he fails to bring about some action on the part of Spain which will look to the early settlement of the difficulties in Cuba, and communicates to Congress the fact that he has failed, I think there will be no possibility of preventing then the passage of a resolution for forcible intervention. Those who have been clamoring for liberty and freedom and war, have worked up a spirit in the country that something must be done and done quickly to stop the condition of things in Cuba, and I think Congress believes that sentiment to be stronger and more general than it really is. I think the President himself believes that the people of the United States will not tolerate much longer the war in Cuba and that, if he cannot end it by negotiations, the people will insist that he shall do so by force. In the meantime, he will do all in his power for peaceful adjustment; but the difficulty is with Spain. Spain does not want war, but will not and apparently can not agree to independence, and it seems to have come down to about this. Will the people sustain the President in accepting from Spain any proposed settlement which does not include absolute independence for Cuba? Spain might be induced to make more truly liberal propositions for autonomy as it is called, or in the direction of self-government for Cuba than she has yet made. The question is, if she did, and the President believed that the proposition ought to be accepted by the insurgents, will the country sustain him

in saying so if they feel sure of Cuban independence? This sets forth the gravity of the situation. There has not been openly manifested yet a sentiment which indicates that the people do not want the United States to fight Spain to liberate Cuba if its independence cannot be brought about by peaceable methods. The report of the naval board of inquiry is likely to excite them still more, but I think the conservative people of the United States and Congress will be able to prevent action over the President's head. If the President cannot get a settlement with Spain and the insurgents, which is equivalent to independence, I fear nothing can restrain Congress from declaring for intervention, which is the same thing as declaring war.

On the same date in a letter to Governor Cooke, he said:

A few of us have determined that there ought to be no war if it can be avoided and yet we know that the situation is serious and critical and a little thing may plunge us into a conflict. It is very difficult to resist what is supposed to be the war spirit of the country. Representations are made here all the time that the country is ready for war, and members of Congress urge the President to bring matters to an immediate issue; that unless Spain immediately surrenders control of Cuba and gives independence to the insurgents, he should recommend Congress to pass resolutions directing intervention, which, of course, is equivalent to declaring war. What we who are classed as conservatives are trying to do is to prevent Congress overriding the President and gain time for negotiations which we hope will result in some satisfactory adjustment of the conditions in Cuba, or in propositions on the part of Spain which ought to be satisfactory in the nature of things, so that we can have presented to Congress and to the people the alternative of accepting a settlement of affairs in Cuba which ought to be satisfactory to clear and reasoning

people, or of going to war. I believe that if that alternative can be presented the sober second thought of the American people will keep us out of war. As I say the situation is critical. Members of Congress are frightened to do so lest they should be defeated in case absolute independence is not secured either by negotiation or by hostilities. The President has been very doubtful whether he could hold Congress in check but I think has now come to the conclusion that the conservative element in Congress will stand by him. The pressure, however, for immediate action and intervention is very strong.

Now, I have told you all that any one can know. It may come to war before the week is out. I think it will drift along for some time to come, and I hope that Spain may be induced to make propositions which under the circumstances ought to be satisfactory. I think I see the embarrassment you feel. If you should call a special session of the Legislature to put the National Guard in a state of efficiency, it would, of course, add at once to the general alarm. The tension is so great that anything done looking even remotely to hostilities tends to inflame public sentiment. I suppose that letters have been written to you as to the governors of New York and Massachusetts asking what could be relied upon from the State in case of necessity. The condition as it seems to me is serious enough, so that it would be well for you to come down and talk it over with the President and Secretary of War.

A third letter, addressed to John H. Flagg, contains this paragraph:

I suppose that the President for two or three weeks has been trying by such indirect methods as he may employ to get Spain to consent to a liberal government in Cuba; Canada and Australia being suggested as models. I think that if Spain would give that degree of freedom to Cuba, it would get the moral support at least of the United

States. Speaking without information, I suppose that Spain has shown some inclination in this direction. It has been understood here by those who have the President's confidence, that there would be no objection on the part of Spain to our sending supplies to the sufferers, and there is evidently something, I do not know how much, in this idea of an armistice, probably not a technical armistice, but some cessation of hostilities while our negotiations are pending. To this extent there is probably foundation for the rumors in New York, but I do not think the situation clears up any. I think, as I telegraphed you, that the sentiment that there must be immediate action to the end that the conflict in Cuba shall cease, is growing, and is every day becoming more difficult to hold in check, and it has been a question all the while whether if Spain should propose anything short of absolute independence, no matter how liberal and just it might be, Congress would support the President in the acceptance of it or insist upon going to war. I have felt that the Congress would stand by the President, but I am getting a little shaky about it to-day. We had last week the Democrats pretty solidly agreeing to stand by the President and now they show a disposition to make their support conditioned on knowing what he is going to do to put an end to conditions in Cuba. I cannot give you any more complete statement of the situation. I understand that speeches advocating intervention are to be kept up in the Senate. Foraker and Billy Mason are going to speak, and it is rumored that Frye is. What the Foreign Relations Committee, which meets on Wednesday, will do no one knows. It has been thought that they might report an intervention resolution, and then again we have thought that they would not do it until the President was ready for intervention, and that if they did do it, we could beat it in the Senate; but everything seems unsettled to-day.

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About the same time he gave to the press the following brief interview:

I think there is altogether too much war talk. War is only to be contemplated with horror and should not be flippantly talked about. The United States must never engage in war except as a necessity, the necessity of defending its possessions or its honor. We must have no war unless we have a cause which shall justify it in the eyes of the world and to our own conscience. I do not think the sober second thought of the American people is for war, and I believe that our relations with Spain are susceptible of an amicable adjustment.

The report of the naval board placing the responsibility for the destruction of the *Maine* upon Spanish agencies brought negotiations up with a sharp turn. It then became a question of days as to when the President should send a message to Congress which should serve as the foundation of resolutions providing for intervention by the United States. In the tenseness of feeling all over the United States every delay of twenty-four hours seemed an eternity; and the more earnest of the war party in Congress were suspicious of every postponement as an endeavor on the part of the administration to secure some kind of adjustment which would involve peace at the price of honor.

Finally it was given out that the message would be sent in on Monday, April 4th. Then word came that it would surely go to Congress on Wednesday, April 6th. On that day the Capitol was crowded with an expectant throng; but no message came. Instead, the leaders of House and Senate were summoned to the White House where the President showed them a dispatch from Consul-General Lee saying that if the message went in that day, he could not answer for the lives of Americans in Havana and asking until Saturday to get them out of Cuba.

For this memorable time Senator Platt's letters to his friend Flagg almost constitute a diary. Writing on April 2d, he says:

There is not a great deal to be said to-day. If the President has made up his mind as to the particular points of his message to present to Congress he has not communicated the same in detail even to the members of his Cabinet yet. He has been much in consultation with Judge Day, and with the Attorney-General. He still wants, if possible, to avoid any immediate declaration of war by Congress, has still some hope that further negotiations may result more favorably. The difficulty is to get at it. Spain's answer seems to have closed the door to everything except an ultimatum. He has not yet said even what he thinks it would be wise for Congress to do; he has taken to-day and to-morrow to put his message in shape. Very much depends upon his message. Congress, as indicated last night, is considerably sobered by the situation, but I think in each House they are anxious that action be inaugurated looking to hostilities. The situation is very awkward. Spain, by reason of the rescinding of the reconcentration order and the application of $600,000 to care for the suffering, has taken the humanitarian motive quite out of the question, and men who have been for war at all events, but have been putting it on the ground of humanity, now find that they must seek other grounds. They have been declaring that they did not propose to go to war on account of the destruction of the *Maine*, and now that seems to be the real ground on which they must proceed, if they can bring this at all within any international rules. It is impossible to say to-day what will take place Monday, and the President may not get his message ready so as to send it in Monday, perhaps Tuesday. I think I know pretty nearly as well as any one the President's mind, but I do not know precisely what he is going to say or do. I think he is still deliberating. There is not any very logical ground for a declaration of war, and

those who have been most eager for it are casting about for reasons to give for it.

On April 6th, again writing Mr. Flagg, Senator Platt said:

As I telegraphed you this morning, I think the hope of a peaceful solution is pretty much gone. The Foreign Relations Committee seems to have made up its mind in advance of the message and at the present moment is writing perhaps a resolution which will recognize the independence of Cuba, and, counting on the destruction of the *Maine*, which, it says, was either a criminal act or negligence equally criminal on the part of Spain, the barbarous and inhuman warfare, and its inability to maintain a government on the island, demands the withdrawal of its troops, and authorizes the President to use the military and naval forces of the United States including the militia to that end. A good many of us believe the recognition of independence is entirely unnecessary and would like something in the way of a resolution which will give Spain an opportunity to back down before actual hostilities are begun on our part. But the war party is evidently in the majority and will push its views thinking that no one dare stand up against it. While I say this it must be added that the Foreign Relations Committee is not unanimous in insisting on the recognition of independence and it is possible that by to-morrow that feature may be dropped. It is said that the message is not likely to go to the Senate before three or four o'clock to-morrow afternoon. It will be referred to the Committee I think without debate and no report will be made by the Committee until Thursday. The reason for this delay until late in the afternoon is that our consuls may have time to get away from Havana and the island. The *Fern* has been ordered to bring them away. There seems to be a question whether, if this resolution should pass in the form which the Foreign Relations Committee now contemplate, it would be equivalent to a declaration of war or whether

it would be the duty of the President first to communicate the demands contained in the resolution to Spain and get an answer from Spain before the commencement of actual hostilities.

I have given you in a few words I think the situation. There will I hope be a conference to-night between the Committee on Foreign Relations and the President in the hope that the resolution to be reported may be in accordance with his views, but Foraker has seemed to dominate the Committee and any change will have to be over his head.

On April 7th, he further wrote Mr. Flagg, as follows:

There is really no change in the situation to-day; unless Spain between now and Monday gives assurances that she will give up Cuba, Congress will take some action insisting upon that as the only condition of peace. The precise character of the resolution is understood. The President and those who sustain him do not want a recognition of independence, do not want any haste, but a simple resolution directing the President to take at once such steps as may be necessary to terminate hostilities in Cuba, to form a stable government there, and to this end to employ the land and naval forces of the United States. Jingoes want independence and intervention. The contest between the President and his opposers will go along this line. Yesterday we could have passed such a resolution as we desired in the Senate, but the startling dispatch of Lee upset everyone. To-day we are looking up again—to-morrow we may be demoralized. It is comparatively quiet here.

The message came in on April 11th. Resolutions were promptly reported in Senate and House. Those reported in the House followed the moderate lines of the President's message. They directed the President to intervene at once to stop the war in Cuba:

To the end and with the purpose of securing permanent peace and order there, and establishing by the free action

of the people thereof a stable and independent government of their own in the island of Cuba,

and authorized the President to use the land and naval forces to execute the purpose of the resolution. This phraseology did not meet the requirements of those who insisted that Congress should demand, without equivocation, the expulsion of Spain from Cuba. The resolutions reported as a substitute by the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations were longer and had a fighting edge:

WHEREAS the abhorrent conditions which have existed for more than three years in the island of Cuba, so near our own borders, have shocked the moral sense of the people of the United States, have been a disgrace to Christian civilization, culminating, as they have, in the destruction of a United States battleship, with 226 of its officers and crew, while on a friendly visit in the harbor of Havana, and can not longer be endured, as has been set forth by the President of the United States in his message to Congress of April 11, 1898, upon which the action of Congress was invited; Therefore,

Resolved, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

First: That the people of the island of Cuba are, and of right ought to be, free and independent.

Second: That it is the duty of the United States to demand and the Government of the United States does hereby demand, that the Government of Spain at once relinquish its authority and government in the island of Cuba, and withdraw its land and naval forces from Cuba and Cuban waters.

Third: That the President of the United States be, and he hereby is, directed and empowered to use the entire land and naval forces of the United States, and to call into the actual service of the United States the militia of the

several States, to such extent as may be necessary to carry these resolutions into effect.

A minority of the Committee, consisting of three Democrats and Senator Foraker, proposed to amend the first paragraph by inserting after the word "independent" the following:

And that the Government of the United States hereby recognize the republic of Cuba as the true and lawful goverment of that island.

There at once arose a spirited debate wherein bitter attacks were made upon the motives of the administration. A little band of ten Republicans, headed by Chandler and Foraker, stood out with the Democrats and Populists for the minority amendment, and that amendment was adopted by a vote of 51 to 37. The entire debate turned on this question. The real question of peace and war, contained in the second paragraph, was quite lost sight of—even to the point where the House concurred in the Senate resolutions with an amendment striking out the words, "are and" in the first paragraph and the entire clause embodying the recognition of the insurgent government. Senator Platt entered earnestly into the debate. On April 16th, he delivered one of the strongest and most impressive speeches of his entire career in opposition to the proposed amendment.

In beginning the speech he said:

The time for oratory and impassioned utterance has passed. The time has never been for hot words, for epithets, for intemperate speech. Oratory will not bombard Morro Castle. Stinging words, ungracious and unjust epithets may reach and wound the President of the United States but they will not pierce the armor of Spanish battleships.

His concluding words were:

We ought to pass resolutions here which we can justify. We ought not to give our consent to resolutions unjustifiable in their character, for the reason that we desire to accomplish the great purpose in view. When Abraham Lincoln put his name to that immortal document which struck the shackles from the limbs of 4,000,000 people, after having suffered abuse, vituperation, vilification which the abuse heaped upon President McKinley does not parallel, he wrote these magnificent words:

"And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice warranted by the Constitution upon military necessity, I invoke the deliberate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God."

Mr. President, I implore, I adjure the Senate to pass no resolutions upon which it may not write in spirit, if not in fact, the words:

"And upon this act we invoke the deliberate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God."

The resolutions as amended were adopted by the Senate by vote of 67 to 21, Mr. Platt helping to form the minority which consisted of 19 Republicans and 2 Democrats, and after a day and night of intense dramatic interest, the House, in the early morning of April 19th, accepted the Senate resolutions word for word. They were signed by the President on April 21st, and war was on.

After the passage of the resolutions Senator Platt dictated—exactly for what purpose does not appear—the following statement which may be taken as an epitome of his position:

These resolutions mean too little or too much. If they do not mean that there is now in the island of Cuba a free and independent government, then to whom is Spain to

relinquish its authority and government? And when it has been compelled to withdraw its land and naval forces, what then? The President has asked that he be empowered to take measures after the securing of the full and final termination of hostilities, to secure the establishment of a stable government, etc. These resolutions refuse to grant him that authority. Under these resolutions it will be the duty of the President to withdraw the forces simultaneously with the forces of Spain. If there is no government recognized by these resolutions, except the government of Spain, we should certainly see that one is established before our troops are withdrawn. If there is one, certainly nothing else can be meant by the resolutions than that it is recognized as a government. I believe the legal and practical effect of the first resolution is to recognize the sovereignty of the pretended self-government of the insurgents. What else can the resolutions mean? The people are free and independent. Do they use these words only in the sense that they would apply to mankind in general? Every one knows that that phrase is used to designate a free government. So we see clearly the purpose of these resolutions. First,—to do affirmatively what the President recommends us not to do. Second,—to refuse to do what he asks us to do—a most impotent conclusion as ever was.

First I wish to state my conviction and position and to state it so clearly that I will not be misconstrued or misunderstood. The time has come when Spanish rule in Cuba must cease—it has been too long a record of misrule only. I will not pause to frame the indictment. The reasons why it must cease are known to all Americans and are set forth clearly, forcibly, and patriotically in the message of the President of the United States. It has imperilled our peace, it has inflicted injuries upon us, it is inconsistent with our commercial and national interests, it outrages every sentiment of mankind, it makes against all civilization. It must end. With this conviction and this unassailable purpose I have hoped and, until recently,

believed that it might be ended without war, without the burdens and horrors and the losses of war. I believe to-day that what I, together with all America's citizens, desired might have been accomplished peaceably had it not been for the intemperate and inflammatory statements and misstatements of those who from the first have desired to plunge this country into war. I have not been among those who desired war. I would if possible have averted it, never for a moment losing sight of the purpose to be accomplished. And I have only unstinted praise to bestow upon, and the heartiest thanks to give to the President of the United States, in the execution of the great responsibility that has desired the attainment of the end in view through peace rather than through war. To longer hope that the Spanish misrule in Cuba can be ended peaceably seems to be against hope. From the position taken by the President of the United States upon the failure of diplomatic negotiations to secure the emancipation of Cuba, the United States cannot recede, ought not to recede.

In the language of the Executive: "The war in Cuba must stop, and in that island there must be established a stable government, capable of maintaining order," etc.

If this, our determination, results in war, it must come. We should be false to ourselves and to humanity, to the world, and recreant to duty and cowardly, if we hesitated or faltered now.

CHAPTER XXII

EXPANSION AND IMPERIALISM

For Unrelenting Prosecution of the War—Results of the War Accepted—Annexation of Hawaii—Urges Retention of Philippines—Letter to President McKinley—Letter to Professor Fisher—Strongly Advocates Ratification of Treaty of Peace—Speech of December 19, 1899—The Constitutional Right of the U. S. to Acquire and Govern Territory.

ADMIRAL SAMPSON'S fleet set sail for Cuba on April 21st, and with that act of war there came an end to divergent policies in Washington. Henceforward there was only one party and that party was bent on prosecuting the war to a successful issue. For the next four months while the American forces were pressing the enemy by land and by sea we find Senator Platt lending his encouragement by voice and vote. He accepted heartily all the results of the war. When the news came on the second of May that Dewey had sailed with flaming guns into Manila Bay, he was not one of those who tempered praise of American valor with censure of a sailor's rashness and sent up prayers that our ships should be recalled. Having set out in the path he would follow it to the end. The depths of his nature were stirred. The opening up of the Philippines to American civilization appealed to him as a religious opportunity which it would be a national crime to neglect. Even while the war was still on, and before Sampson's fleet had destroyed Cervera's ships off San-

tiago, the question of expansion came to the front in resolutions providing for the annexation of the Hawaiian Islands. This was a question which had been inherited by the McKinley administration. From the time in February, 1892, when President Harrison had sent the treaty of the annexation to the Senate down through the unfortunate experiences of the Cleveland administration with "Paramount" Blount, and his great and good friend, Liliuokalani, the Hawaiian question had developed into one of party policy, although a few eminent and powerful Republicans had ranged themselves strongly against the idea of acquiring insular territory. Senator Platt had little patience with the position assumed by the reactionaries who chirped assent to Speaker Reed's motto—"Empire can wait." In the second session of the Fifty-third Congress resolutions had been presented in the Senate looking to the pacification of the Sandwich Islands. One of the paragraphs of the resolutions declared "that it is unwise and inexpedient under existing conditions to consider at this time any project of annexation of the Hawaiian territory to the United States." Senator Platt favored the general import of the resolutions as did many other Republican Senators but to this declaration he refused to subscribe. He made his position clear in a brief speech on January 24, 1894. He said:

I do not believe that the annexation of the Hawaiian Islands to the United States would violate either the proclaimed or the traditional policy of the United States. I believe on the other hand it would be consonant with and in accord with both the proclaimed and the traditional policy of the United States. I believe it would be in direct line with all that has been said by Presidents and Secretaries of State in reference to this subject for the last fifty years. I

believe it would be in direct line with all the movements for annexation which have taken place heretofore in our history. I believe when we have come to be sixty-five—yes, seventy million people, nearly, we can no longer shut ourselves within narrow limits; and while I have no disposition to acquire territory for the sake of territory, for the sake of aggrandizement or glory or power, I firmly believe that when any territory outside of the present limits of the United States becomes necessary for our defence or essential for our commercial development, we ought to lose no time in acquiring it, if it can be done without injustice to other nations and other people.

From this position he never swerved. When the resolutions of annexation came before the Senate in the summer of 1898 he voted for them and aided in the debate against those who argued for purposes of delay that the business should be undertaken by treaty instead of legislative action; and when a little later the far more momentous question of acquiring the Philippine Islands during the negotiations of the treaty of peace with Spain became absorbing, Senator Platt was one who insisted most stoutly that for the United States to abandon the Philippines would be a colossal error, to be regretted forever.

The protocol looking to the treaty which brought the war to an end was approved at Madrid on August 11, 1898. The air was full of rumors that in drafting a treaty of peace the administration would agree to withdraw American forces from the Philippines and leave them again in the hands of Spain. That it was the inclination of the President at that time to accept just as few responsibilities as possible in the far East was well understood. In theory that may have been the wisest position for an administration to assume. But it was

not in harmony with the feeling of the people of the United States. The most clear-headed and far-seeing leaders of Congress perceived that the fact was already in effect accomplished—that responsibilities already assumed could not be evaded. Senator Platt's reputation for conservatism and strength proved of vast importance at this crisis. Others clustered about him as about an oak. He did not waver from the beginning in his conviction that the United States should retain control of the entire Philippine group. The arguments of the anti-imperialists seemed to him preposterous—almost lacking in patriotism. At the time of the signing of the protocol, Congress was in recess and he was at his home in Connecticut, close in touch there with the heart of his own people. It was a time, he thought, for communicating to President McKinley his judgment of what should be done and he acted unhesitatingly. Under date of August 15, 1898, from his home in Washington, Connecticut, he wrote as follows:

Dear Mr. President:

I feel that I ought to say that during the past week I have been well over the State of Connecticut and I am satisfied that nine tenths of the people of the State have an intense feeling that we should insist upon the cession of all the Philippine Islands. Those who believe in Providence, see, or think they see, that God has placed upon this Government the solemn duty of providing for the people of these islands a government based upon the principle of liberty no matter how many difficulties the problem may present. They feel that it is our duty to attempt its solution. Among Christian, thoughtful people the sentiment is akin to that which has maintained the missionary work of the last century in foreign lands. I assure you that it is difficult to overestimate the strength and intensity of this sentiment.

If in the negotiations for peace Spain is permitted to retain any portion of the Philippines it will be regarded as a failure on the part of this nation to discharge the greatest moral obligation which could be conceived.

I have spoken of the Christian sentiment but the feeling that we should not allow Spain to retain possession of the Philippines pervades all classes of our people. If I am to be guided by the views of the best people in this State and the large majority of all the people, I shall be compelled to vote against any treaty which allows Spain to continue to exercise sovereignty over any of the inhabitants of those islands.

Very respectfully,
O. H. Platt.

In this brief letter to the President was condensed the entire argument for retaining the Philippines. It was the expression of a statesman of deep religious feeling, firmly confident that he was reading rightly the pulse of the people and reassured to know that their settled judgment coincided with his own. In all the months and years of debate that followed the signing of the treaty of peace, no really convincing argument was advanced, the germ of which was not contained in those few pregnant sentences. Senator Platt himself subsequently elaborated his position both in personal letters and congressional debate, but never more effectively.

He seems to have been stimulated by the anti-expansion sentiment which found grateful nurseries under the elms of New Haven and in the college yard of Cambridge. The Yale College band of anti-expansionists was especially dogmatic and self-assertive. Mr. Platt's personal relations with the leading members of the Yale faculty had always been close and friendly,

United States Senate,

WASHINGTON ~~D.C.,~~ Conn Aug 15, 1898

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FACSIMILE OF LETTER TO PRESIDENT McKINLEY CONCERNING THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

that it is difficult to overestimate the strength and intensity of this sentiment — If in the negotiations for peace Spain is permitted to retain any portion of the Philippines it will be regarded as a failure on the part of this nation to discharge the greatest moral obligation which could be conceived ——

I have spoken of the Christian sentiment but the feeling that we should not allow Spain to retain possession of the Philippines surrounds all classes of our people — If I ~~am~~ to be guided by the views of the best people in this state, and the majority of all the people, I ~~should~~ shall be compelled to vote against any treaty which allows Spain to continue to exercise ~~control~~ sovereignty over any of the inhabitants of those islands —

Very Respectfully,
O H Platt

and therefore he was peculiarly the object of their missionary zeal. From one of the most eminent of them, George P. Fisher, Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the Theological Department, he received, only three days prior to his communication with President McKinley, an argumentative letter against the retention of the Philippines. The immediate response to this was the luminous note to McKinley; and a few days later he disturbed his well earned summer's rest to write a long and comprehensive letter to Professor Fisher, which, as a contemporary document throwing light on the forces at work to determine the issue of an historic time, may profitably be reproduced here:

I have yours of the twelfth instant, and I think so much of your opinion that I want, if I can, to outline briefly the reasons which induce me to think we ought to insist on American control of the Philippines.

First,—There is no sovereignty there to-day but ours. Spain in surrendering Manila has lost her sovereignty and cannot regain it unless we give it to her. We did not covet or seek possession of the islands; that has come to us in the course of events we did not foresee and which we were powerless to control. When as a necessary step in the war with Spain orders were sent to destroy the Spanish ships, there was never a thought of acquisition; Providence foreshaped the events which forced upon us the question, what should be done with those islands? If we had withdrawn our fleet after the Spanish ships were destroyed, the insurgents with whom wisely or unwisely we were acting in concert, would have been abandoned to the mercy of the Spanish. In a certain sense they were our allies. We had espoused their contest for liberty such as it was. If from a humanitarian standpoint we were impelled to assist Cuban insurgents, we could not in decency abandon the Philippine insurgents. If this was a war for

humanity, Spain's inhumanity in the Philippines was as flagrant as in Cuba. If you say Cuba was nearer, the answer is plain—the duty of succoring the oppressed is not limited by distance—only by present ability to afford it, and we were there and able to discharge that duty. If it had been in our power to succor Armenia, we should not have withheld aid because of the distance. We did not withdraw—we accepted the consequences of our first step, we are there, in control, in real occupation and authority and charged with all the responsibility and obligation that comes with that occupation and authority. What then shall we do?

Second,—There are several things we may do. We might have relinquished all we had gained, given up all claim to authority, ignored all demands of duty and all sense of obligation; left Spain and the insurgents to fight it out. But is there any one in the world who thinks we ought to have done that? The mere suggestion brings a blush of shame to the cheek of every American. But we cannot do that. The procotol provides that we are to keep the bay and port of Manila. That is settled. From that we cannot recede. We have already stipulated for and secured more than a coaling or naval station. We have acquired that much territory and we must hold and govern it.

Shall we then let Spain repossess a portion of the island of Luzon and all other islands and sit by indifferently while the conflict between Spain and her revolted people goes on, careless spectators of results, assenting to her cruelty, injustice, and oppression if Spain succeeds, assenting to universal loot and plunder perhaps, if the insurgents succeed, powerless to interfere? I cannot but believe that to allow Spain to retain any portion of those islands would be to invite endless complication, trouble, and conflict. Remember that Spanish authority and Spanish sovereignty are of the past. Shall we invite other powers, England, Germany, Russia, or France, any or all of them, to take our possessions off our hands because we are in doubt how best

to deal with them? Think of the friction which that would surely create. Manila now is the port of commerce of all the islands, it flows into and out of that port naturally. Any other nation possessing the rest of the islands would seek to divert the commerce to a port of its own. We should seek to retain it and bad blood would at once be stirred up. But as I have before said, we are in control now. By conquest all the Philippines are ours unless we relinquish them. Are we not then under the most imperative moral obligation to protect that people and establish there such a government as is best adapted to their need and condition? If they are entitled by Divine endowment to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" are we not bound to protect them in their enjoyment so far as it may be done? Who can do it better than we? Who can do it so well? Shall we deliberately shirk the duty because we fear that its performance may be attended with difficulty?

Third,—We of this country have always asserted our firm belief in an overruling Providence. We have professed to recognize the hand of God in history. Does not Providence, does not the finger of God unmistakably point to the civilization and uplifting of the Orient, to the development of its people, to the spread of liberty, education, social order, and Christianity there through the agency of American influence? Can any man, even the least thoughtful, fail to see that the next great world wave of civilization is to overspread China, and how much that means? What kind of civilization is it to be, Russian, German, French? Or shall it be the civilization of the English-speaking people, led indeed by the United States?

Fourth,—So far as to duty, in this case duty and interest coincide. American civilization and institutions will go only where our trade goes—"Trade follows the flag"—civilization goes along with trade. The missionary may be the pioneer of civilization but he works at a terrible disadvantage amid the institutions of heathenism. Commerce clothes the missionary with power.

We must stand with England or England stand with us for "the open door" in China. Neither can keep the door open alone. Combined, the rest of the world is powerless to shut it. Can you fail to see that in the Providence of God the time has come when the institutions of the English-speaking people are in final conflict with the institutions of despotism and irreligion, and that China is the battle ground? The nations that control the commerce of China will impress their institutions upon that people. Have we no call to that conflict? Again we can only be truly great as we reach out beyond ourselves. Selfishness is poverty and misery both. To lose a man's life is to save it, and this is as true of a nation as of a man. The national policy of isolation is no longer for our best interest. To pursue it with all that is claimed for it by its advocates is national selfishness. When we were weak in numbers and in resources it was a good policy, but a nation of seventy-five millions of people, greater in resources and power than any other nation, can no longer, in justice to itself or humanity, insist on isolation. We are first in the family of nations; the head of the family has no right to disclaim an interest in the welfare of the other members. If we are to let our light shine as you say, must we not carry it where it can be seen? Is it quite enough to have a statue of liberty enlightening the world at the entrance of New York harbor?

Speaking in a selfish and materialistic sense, no nation can be great in the truest sense until it takes its full share of the commerce of the world, till it is as strong on the sea as on the land. With commerce come riches and power and true greatness as well as the opportunity to benefit the world.

Shall we reach out beyond ourselves, shall we go forward or stand still? If we would maintain ourselves in the front rank we must go forward. We must claim and secure our fair share of the opening trade of the East. With the Philippines we are in a position to demand it, without them we have no advantage of position, and can be easily ignored. With Hawaii, Guam, and the Philippines we have three

almost equidistant stations on the shortest route which any nation has to China with its trade now marvellously to expand.

Fifth,—But why can we not Americanize the Philippines? Is American enterprise and influence limited in these days of steam and electricity by the distance between us and them? Have we not Americanized the Sandwich Islands where we had no government control, and were they not weeks farther away from us when our missionaries first went there than the Philippines now are? Are we not nearer to the Philippines now than we were to London in the days of the Revolution? Nearer than we were to California in 1840? Are the Filipinos more barbarous, savage, and untamable than were the Sandwich Islanders? Have they not at least shown a longing for liberty as they understand it, when they have thus maintained this warfare against Spanish misrule and injustice? Nor can I understand why it is supposed to be necessary to incorporate them into our political community in any dangerous sense.

Has England incorporated South Africa into its political community? In a certain sense it has, but only in the sense that it exercises control and provides for the people that come under its sway a better government than they ever enjoyed otherwise, and the government best calculated for their happiness, freedom, and development. The Philippines would belong to us rather than become part of us. We should govern them or see that they were governed, and if we discharge our duty to them in that respect as we should, it will be to their incalculable benefit. The idea that we cannot under our system acquire or possess any country, territory, or even island of the sea unless we intend to admit our acquisition to the full privilege of statehood has, in my mind, no foundation to rest upon. If our own defence, our necessary development, or real interest requires us to take other territory, we should take it and then proceed to govern it in the best possible way. Canada and Australia are instances of what such communi-

ties might in the lapse of years become without any detriment to our system. I would not acquire for the sake of mere acquisition or aggrandizement, nor would I on the other hand refuse to do what duty or national interest may require.

"New occasions teach new duties" and I cannot help the conviction that the United States is called by Providence to a great work for mankind—that each ship in Manila Bay was a new *Mayflower* steering boldly through the winter sea, the harbinger and agent of a new civilization for lands where its beneficent influences have been unfelt and unknown.

Pardon my enthusiasm. I am so full of the idea that I cannot write or look upon the situation tamely.

The unerring logic of Senator Platt's contention was fully justified by the event. When the peace envoys came to consider, on the ground and face to face with real conditions, what should be done with the Philippines it was found, as the wiser statesmen of that day had foreseen, that there could be no sure way of a lasting peace except through an agreement that the United States should continue to hold the islands where Spain's sovereignty had been dethroned.

It was not in the books, however, that the conclusions of the peace commission should be accepted by the Senate without question. The anti-imperialists kept on smiting the air with a fury which was in inverse ratio to their number and influence. The ablest of their number in the Senate, the one whose utterances commanded the most respect, was George F. Hoar of Massachusetts. Speaker Reed in the House also contributed the influence of his great position and prestige, with a biting wit which in another cause might have been compelling. It was a source of grief to Senator

Platt that on this question which he regarded as vital he should be obliged to take issue with Senator Hoar, long esteemed by him as a personal friend as well as one of the ablest and purest men in public life. But having set his hand to the plough he could not turn back —considerations of friendship must yield to demands of public duty. Various resolutions were introduced by Senators who believed that the United States should not retain control of the Philippines. The passage of any one of them would have resulted in placing the United States Government in a false position in the event of the ratification of the treaty and might even have evidenced a feeling in the Senate which would have caused the treaty's defeat. The mere discussion of them watered the seed of insurrection in Luzon. For a time at the beginning of the session the "Antis" seemed to be having things their own way. Senator Vest of Missouri on December 6th introduced the following resolution, which opened up an opportunity for debate:

Resolved, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That under the Constitution of the United States no power is given to the Federal Government to acquire territory to be held and governed permanently as colonies.

The colonial system of European nations cannot be established under our present Constitution, but all territory acquired by the Government, except such small amount as may be necessary for coaling stations, correction of boundaries, and similar governmental purposes, must be acquired and governed with the purpose of ultimately organizing such territory into States suitable for admission into the Union.

Upon this declaration the anti-imperialists took their

stand. Vest, Hoar, and others delivered speeches which were undeniably able and plausible. It remained for Platt to voice the opinion of the administration, the majority of the Senate, and of the overwhelming majority of the American people. On December 19th, he took the floor to present an argument in opposition to the Vest resolution which was to serve as a text-book for all who came after him. He said in the beginning:

I do not propose to discuss the so-called policy of expansion nor the features of a government which we may authorize or establish in any territory which we may acquire. I will simply remark, in passing, that expansion has been the law of our national growth; more than that, it has been the great law of our racial development, and the United States has shown a capacity for government in all trying times and under all trying conditions, and has shown that it is equal to any circumstances which may arise. . . . I propose to maintain that the United States is a nation; that as a nation it possesses every sovereign power not reserved in its Constitution to the States or the people; that the right to acquire territory was not reserved and is therefore an inherent sovereign right; that it is a right upon which there is no limitation and in regard to which there is no qualification; that in certain instances the right may be inferred from specific clauses in the Constitution, but that it exists independent of these clauses; that in the right to acquire territory is found the right to govern it, and as the right to govern is a sovereign right, not limited in the Constitution; and that these propositions are in accordance with the views of the framers of the Constitution, the decisions of the Supreme Court, and the legislation of Congress.

It is to be regretted that the limitations of this work forbid the reproduction here of this speech in its en-

tirety. It was profound, and comprehensive, packed with citations from the debates on the Constitution, from decisions of the Supreme Court, and from the actual experience of the United States in the acquisition and control of territory. Some of his most fruitful sentences were in the form of replies to questions put by Senators on the opposing side. In response to Allen of Nebraska he declared:

> I do not think there is any limitation upon our power to acquire territory.

And again:

> I do not believe there is any obligation on this government to give to people who may inhabit territory which we may acquire the right to self-government until such time as we think they are fit to exercise it; and that is the doctrine we have always maintained in dealing with the territory acquired.

He expressed his agreement with Daniel Webster that Congress:

> may establish any such government and any such laws in the territories as in its discretion it may see fit. It is subject of course to the rules of justice and propriety but it is under no constitutional restraints.

But the sentence by which this speech will be longest remembered—a sentence that filled the souls of the "Antis" with rage and for a time concentrated upon its author the venom of their attacks—was in reply to a question put by Mr. Hoar. Consumed as he thought with the fire of patriotism, Hoar had listened with ill-concealed impatience through the greater part of Platt's speech and then he arose. This colloquy followed:

MR. HOAR: May I ask the Senator from Connecticut one question at this point?

MR. PLATT: Certainly.

MR. HOAR: It is whether, in his opinion, governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed?

The trembling voice with which the aged Massachusetts Senator put this question betrayed the tenseness of his feeling. It was the conclusive, damning appeal to the Declaration of Independence which was so conspicuous a feature of the anti-imperialist propaganda, and when Senator Platt replied with quiet emphasis, "From the consent of *some* of the governed," there was a gasp of dismay. Then Senator Platt went on to explain: "The State of Massachusetts governs people who cannot read and write, and it governs them pretty effectually too. If they commit any crime, it punishes them, but it does not allow them to vote." He did not deny the principles of the Declaration of Independence but pointed out that all sorts of qualifications for voting had been adopted in the United States:

There are 250,000 American citizens within five miles of the spot where I stand. They are governed by Congress. Not one of them can vote. His consent is not asked. The government in the District of Columbia certainly does not depend upon the consent of the governed. Does the Senator from Massachusetts hold that this provision for governing the District of Columbia, exercised under that clause of the Constitution which says that Congress shall have exclusive jurisdiction of ten miles square in the District of Columbia, is a violation of the doctrine of the Declaration of Independence, that all governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed? Does he hold that that is a violation of the principle for which we contended when we revolted and severed our connection with Great Britain,

because there was taxation without representation? Oh, no, Mr. President. In his fear and doubt the Senator from Massachusetts sees lions in the path that are not there; if we go straight forward, though it may be the Hill of Difficulty, we shall find that the lions at least are chained, and we shall arrive at the House Beautiful.

In conclusion, I cannot understand either the sentiment or the motive of those who are unwilling to concede that our Government is a nation, and who fear to see it clothed with every element of sovereignty which a nation should possess and does possess.

Why should any man, why, especially, should any Senator, wish to detract from, to diminish or belittle the power of his government? Why strive by subtle, metaphysical, and logic-chopping arguments to hamper its operations and circumscribe its province? Rather should we in our national love rejoice to see it invested with strength. Rather should we bid it Godspeed in its mission to relieve the oppressed, to right every wrong, and to extend the institutions of free government. For this is the people's government; the government of a great people, a liberty-loving people, a people that can be trusted to do right and to guarantee to all men who shall come under its beneficent sway and be subject to its jurisdiction the largest measure of liberty consistent with good order and their general well-being.

Rather let us have faith in the Government, faith in its future. Stilled be the voice of timidity and distrust, stilled be the utterance of captious and carping criticism. Let us have faith that the powers of Government will never be unrighteously exercised. Like Lincoln, when he met the contention that the Government had no power adequate to its self-preservation, let us turn from disputatious subtleties and "have faith that right makes might, and in that faith dare to do our duty as we understand it." In that faith the mountains of doubt will be removed and the way of duty become straight and plain.

Little more than a century has passed since from the tower of Independence Hall in Philadelphia, when we severed our connection with Great Britain, the Liberty Bell rang out the message, "Proclaim liberty throughout the land and to all the inhabitants thereof." We were small and weak then. Timid doubters said there was a lion in the path, but the spirit of the Constitution was in that message. With that Constitution came nationality and sovereignty. Under that Constitution, in the name and by the power of the nation, liberty has been proclaimed to regions never dreamed of by the fathers. Is it for us now, when we have become great and strong, though timid doubters still say there are lions in the path, to declare that neither in the spirit of the Constitution nor by the exercise of national sovereignty can we proclaim liberty a rood or a foot beyond our present territorial limits? Oh! for the faith and the courage of the fathers!

From that day less and less was heard in the long drawn out discussion about the Declaration of Independence and "the consent of the governed." Senator Platt had effectually punctured the bubble of that particular argument against the acquisition of the Philippines.[1]

[1] On October 11, 1899, Mr. Platt delivered an address on "Expansion" before the Union League Club of Brooklyn, from which the following excerpts are taken:

"Very strange as it seems to me, there are some persons who think we ought to abandon or surrender our new possessions, but there is nothing in the history of our development to justify the expectation that when the United States has once acquired territory, it will ever give it away, barter, or sell it, or surrender it to armed force. There can be no distinction drawn between Porto Rico, the Philippines, or the smaller islands in this respect. Rather does our whole history show that with every acquisition of territory we have fully recognized our obligation to provide good government therein, government by which the rights of the people are respected and their best interests promoted. We have never plundered or misgoverned new territory and we never shall. We have never

oppressed the people in new territory, nor shall we do so now. To allege that we intend to misgovern or oppress in our new possessions is to slander our Government, and I can think of no more atrocious slander than that. All this newly acquired territory belongs to the United States, and we are going to keep it, provide for it with the best possible government, and immeasurably benefit its people. It has been acquired by conquest and treaty. The treaty which confirmed the conquest is the supreme law of the land, and the performance of every obligation specified or involved in that treaty is as truly a national duty as the execution of any law upon our statute books. . . . I really have not discovered the anti-imperialist who urges constitutional objections respecting the acquisition of Porto Rico or feels that the Declaration of Independence was violated when Spain ceded it to us and we accepted it as the result of the war. Democratic platform makers would, like the ancient Augurs, be laughing in each others' faces if a plank in their platform should denounce the acquisition of Porto Rico alone. Not a soul of them would listen to a proposition to give away, sell, barter, or surrender that island. So I say that I find great difficulty in speaking of the Philippines as disconnected from Porto Rico. Our right is the same to each, our title as perfect to one as the other, the difficulties of administration as great in one case as the other, and the fact that our people as a whole are satisfied with the acquisition of Porto Rico shows that no one really believes there is anything in the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution of the United States, or the principles upon which our Government is founded, which made our acquisition of the Philippines improper or forbids our retention of them. All of this talk about the consent of the governed, Filipino independence, the wickedness of subjugation, and the denial of constitutional rights to the people there, is simply a false issue. The thing which really troubles the few anti-imperialists is that they fear the United States has made a bad bargain. . . . All the consequences of war must be accepted by the nation that engages in war, and the unavoidable consequence of our triumph in Manila Bay was that we should assume control of the Philippine Islands; that a duty arose when the Spanish ships went down. Neither man nor nation can avoid duty and achieve just success. It is the glory of our nation that it has always met and performed national duty. If the war with Spain was, as we believed and avowed, a war for humanity, our obligation to Spanish subjects in the Philippines was just as great as to Spanish subjects in Cuba. If we were liberators in Cuba, we were equally so in the Philippines. The assumption of control in the Philippine Islands was a duty which we owed to the nations

of the world, to ourselves, to the inhabitants of those islands, and to mankind. It would have been criminal neglect to have abandoned the Filipinos either to Spain or a Malay dictator. We emerged from our war with honor. We should have been dishonored if we had shirked the obligations which that war imposed upon us. . . .

"Expansion has marked every step of our national growth and progress. Every expansion of our territory has been in accordance with the irresistible law of growth. We could no more resist the successive expansions by which we have grown to be the strongest nation on earth, than a tree can resist its natural growth. The history of territorial expansion is the history of our nation's progress and glory. It is a matter to be proud of, not to lament. We should rejoice that Providence has given us the opportunity to extend our influence, our institutions, and our civilization into regions hitherto closed to us rather than contrive how we can thwart its designs. When Admiral Dewey was asked how he accounted for the fact that so little damage was done by the Spanish guns at Manila he is said to have replied: 'If I were a religious man, and I hope I am, I should say that the hand of God was in it.' Your own Dr. Dix said the other day in his pulpit that he felt 'that some unseen and mysterious power had been, and is, at work conducting and compelling a certain end, to be accomplished by peaceful methods if possible, but if not peacefully then by the whole force of the powers of the State.' I believe with Admiral Dewey and Dr. Dix, that the United States has found in its Philippine problem the greatest opportunity for the extension of freedom and beneficent government which it has ever enjoyed."

CHAPTER XXIII

NATIONAL DUTY

Debate with Senator Hoar, February 11, 1902—The Destiny of the Republic—Favors a Colonial System.

ONCE more Platt and Hoar came together on this question of the Philippines. It was during the long continued debate on the Philippine tariff in the session of 1901–2, when the entire question of the retention of the archipelago was lugged into the discussion. Aguinaldo was in captivity, and the guerilla bands who had been resisting American authority in the islands were rapidly disappearing so that American military forces, no longer needed to preserve order, were gradually withdrawing and the islands were approaching a condition of permanent peace. But the anti-imperialist propaganda in the United States was still busy, and it had its chief encouragement from the little band of irreconcilables in the Senate at Washington. On February 11th, Senator Teller had occupied almost the entire day in a violent assault upon the Government's Philippine policy. Toward the close of the afternoon he rested and Mr. Platt took the floor to reply to certain criticisms of the character of our officials, lauding the work of the Philippine Commission, and dwelling upon the rapid progress of the pacification of the islands:

I think [he said] if we take facts and not fancies, if we take things as they really are, and not as they are conjured up by the party of protest and disapproval, we shall see that we are getting along very well in the Philippine Islands, and are progressing very rapidly toward a condition there, in which the Filipinos themselves will have a very large share of participation, which will be entirely satisfactory to them and which they will welcome as a blessing to themselves and the archipelago.

This incident would have ended there had not Senator Hoar undertaken to reply, disputing Platt's assertions, questioning the genuineness of the elections which had been held in the provinces, and belittling the quality of the free schools established by American authority. "I hope," he concluded, "the rosy view of my friend, the Senator from Connecticut, will turn out to be all right, but I confess I am afraid he will have to try again."

The manner of the attack stirred Platt to a response which the newspapers of the day describe as a "revival of the best traditions of the Senate." He regretted the sneers at the efforts to educate the children of the Philippine Islands, and then he took up the question of treason against the United States. He read from the statutes of Connecticut the law which relates to treason and misprision of treason and proceeded to apply it:

As I understand that statute, Mr. President, there are certain persons living in the State of the Senator from Massachusetts who, if they had come into the State of Connecticut and commenced to carry on intercourse with the Filipinos with intent to aid them or to defeat or embarrass the measures of the Government of the State or of the United States, would have subjected themselves to the penalty of this statute; and yet the people of Con-

necticut have not been chafing under it. The people of Connecticut think that is right, and that a man who, when there is a rebellion against the State or the United States, enters into communication with the enemy for the purpose of embarrassing the operations of the State or United States, commits a crime, and subjects himself to punishment.

If we are a Government worthy of the name, worthy of living, worthy of a place in the present or the future [he exclaimed with fervor], wherever men take arms against the Government of the United States in any country, district, or territory where the sovereignty of the United States prevails, we will put down that rebellion. . . . No perversion of the doctrine of independence and no perversion of the glory of liberty is going to convince this American people that it is not only its right but its duty to itself to put down armed resistance against the Government wherever it may rear its hateful head.

He compared the situation in the Philippines with the attitude of the South at the close of the Civil War:

I do not want to say anything to revive the memories of the saddest war of recent times, but I cannot refrain from alluding to the fact that for four long years we resisted this doctrine that government in its strict and literal sense depended upon the consent of the governed, and that eleven States and the people of those States, claiming that they could not be coerced, claiming that they were struggling for liberty and establishing an independence of their own, for four long years fought that question out with us, and we prevailed.

And now, if I understand, we have done the same thing in the Philippines. Some people over there, a few only compared with the great mass of people, followed the fortunes of one Aguinaldo. Did he have any consent of the governed upon which to rely? If the doctrine of the consent of the governed must be strictly enforced here, I inquire what consent of the governed this vaunted and eulogized

Aguinaldo had in the Philippine Islands? What right had he, any more than we, to demand the right to govern those islands?

In all the range of his public speech there is no finer bit of exalted eloquence than the words with which he brought this unpremeditated utterance to a close:

Talk about commercialism! Is this matter to be weighed by bookkeeping to see where the balance of advantage is in dollars and cents? I think the United States of America has a high call to duty, to a moral duty, to duty to advance the cause of free government in the world by something more than example. It is not enough to say to a country over which we have acquired an undisputed and indisputable sovereignty: "Go your own gait; look at our example. In the entrance of the harbor of New York, our principal port, there is the statue of Liberty Enlightening the World. Look at that, and follow our example."

No, Mr. President. When the Anglo-Saxon race crossed the Atlantic and stood on the shores of Massachusetts Bay and on Plymouth Rock that movement meant something more than the establishment of religious and civil liberty within a narrow, confined, and limited compass. It had in it the force of the Almighty; and from that day to this it has been spreading, widening, and extending until, like the stone seen by Daniel in his vision cut out of the mountain without hands, it has filled all our borders, and ever westward across the Pacific that influence which found its home in the *Mayflower* and its development on Plymouth Rock has been extending and is extending its sway and its beneficence.

I believe, Mr. President, that the time is coming, as surely coming as the time when the world shall be Christianized, when the world shall be converted to the cause of free government, and I believe the United States is a providentially appointed agent for that purpose. The day may be

long in coming and it may be in the far future, but he who has studied the history of this western world from the twenty-second day of December, 1620, to the present hour must be blind indeed if he cannot see that the cause of free government in the world is still progressing and that what the United States is doing in the Philippine Islands is in the extension of that beneficent purpose.

He had inflicted wounds which were never to be healed. As he took his seat after delivering his fervid peroration, Senator Hoar came over and sat beside him. "Mr. Platt," he said in a broken voice, "I fully expected that somebody would say all this; but I did n't think that you would be the one." From that hour the personal relations between the two great Senators were never quite as they had been before, although toward the end there was a restoration of kindly feeling, and Platt's tribute to Hoar on the occasion of the eulogies of the latter in the Senate a few years later was one of the most beautiful and appropriate then spoken.

Believing as he did in the constitutional power of this Government to acquire territory when and where it might see fit, Mr. Platt at the same time held clearly defined opinions as to the manner in which such territory should be governed. He was unalterably opposed to any proposition looking to the annexation of non-contiguous territory with any understanding that it was ever to become an integral part of the United States, entitled to the privilege of statehood. This question first arose acutely in his mind with reference to Hawaii, after the passage of the resolution of annexation in the summer of 1898. We were in the midst of the war with Spain when our future course with regard to conquered territory was still unsettled, and he felt that in Hawaii we should proceed with

caution as establishing a possible precedent for more serious questions later to arise.

He was in consultation with President McKinley on this subject and on July 9th, after a call at the White House, he wrote to the President, as follows:

Since seeing you this morning I have thought much of the work of the commission to prepare a code of laws for Hawaii. I trust that in preparing this code of laws nothing will be done or agreed upon which will in any way commit the United States to the project of their making a state of the Hawaiian Islands, or incorporating them with an existing State. It seems to me that we must now mark out our policy for all our future as to territory which we may conquer or be obliged to take, and that it should be understood that statehood is out of the question.

We have Alaska now, we have Hawaii, we may have possessions that we conquer from Spain. We may be obliged either for self-defence or for our own development, to acquire territory elsewhere, as for instance along the route of the Nicaragua Canal if we ever build it. We shall need coaling stations, and there are various emergencies in which a nation like ours may be compelled to acquire territory. In saying this I am far from being what is called an "expansionist," but I recognize the fact that we can no longer shut ourselves up within our present limits.

Our history and tradition have begotten the idea in the public mind that we cannot have colonies or dependencies except we incorporate them into our system as states. This will never do, and we must educate our people to understand when we acquire possessions outside of our integral territory that we have the right and the power, and that it is our duty to see that the best possible government is provided for such possessions, but that they have no claim to become states. Contrary to the general belief, such was the view of the wisest men who framed the Constitution. I merely

speak of this now from an indefinite fear that our commission to prepare a code of laws may in some way encourage the idea that the Hawaiian Islands may in some remote future become a state or a part of a state, in our Government.

I think they ought to be very careful in this respect, and I hope that in talking with them you will impress this view upon them. President Dole and Chief-Justice Judd are very astute men. I have a little fear that Senator Morgan may think that they have the right to territorial government which we have always said was a pledge of statehood. I think we may well follow the policy of England, adapting the government of her colonies or dependencies to the capacity of the people. England has every kind of a government for her colonies from what is called the "Crown" government to the liberal governments of Canada and Australia, which are practically republics with a nominal subjection to the mother country.

Our duty and our only duty is to see that the best government for which the people have capacity is provided for Hawaii and any other dependencies which may become ours. In other words, the United States should see to it that they have good government and should stop there. If we for a moment tolerate the idea of present or future statehood, we shall have infinite trouble.

Will you pardon this brief expression of my views? I think the question of what kind of a government shall be provided for Hawaii may be left to the future. It is not necessary to determine it fully now. The laws of Hawaii are to remain in force until Congress adopts new ones, and there need be no haste about planning and putting into operation a specific form of government there. We ought not to even use the word "territory" in connection with the Hawaiian Islands.

A similar question arose five years later when the proposal was made to organize the Territory of Alaska. In the course of a letter which he wrote on June 11, 1903,

to Senator Dillingham of Vermont, Mr. Platt declared his position again, without equivocation:

I am very decidedly of the opinion that our policy should be, and should be declared to be, that we do not propose to admit states from outside of what may be called our home territory. I felt it when we adopted a form of government for the Sandwich Islands, Porto Rico, and the Philippines, but I thought the time was not ripe then to say just what I thought about it. My idea is that as to those outside possessions, we should retain over them the complete right of government as might appear to be for our own and their best interests, without any promise or intimation of future statehood. It makes no difference by what name such a government is to be called, whether colonial or independent or despotic. I do not believe we can afford to let in states from outside our older territory—in other words, I believe that the United States should be bounded on the east by the Atlantic Ocean, on the north by the British possessions, on the west by the Pacific Ocean, and on the south by the Gulf and by Mexico; that whatever territory comes in outside of that should be governed by us, and not by the people therein in the capacity of states admitted upon equal footing with the present States.

I told Senator Beveridge that if he brought in a bill for the organization of the Territory of Alaska, and the appointment of a delegate, I should have to oppose it, or at least propose an amendment, which should declare the policy of the United States to be against its future admission as a state.

CHAPTER XXIV

ON GUARD OVER CUBA

New Problems—Chairman of Committee on Cuban Relations—Opposed to Annexation—The Question of Sovereignty—Visit to Cuba, 1900—The Cuban Scandal—Extra Allowances.

WITH peace formally a fact, through the ratification of the Treaty of Paris, with American supremacy established permanently in Hawaii, Porto Rico, and the Philippines, with United States troops occupying the newly liberated island of Cuba, the American Congress was confronted by unaccustomed problems. It was fortunate that the men who then controlled the affairs of state were such as they were. In every crisis of American history it had happened hitherto that leaders fit to cope with it had been ready at hand, and the pregnant time following the war with Spain found its own leaders in the men already shaping the deliberations of Cabinet and Congress. McKinley was in the White House, broadened and strengthened by the stress of war; Hay was at the State Department, a consummate diplomat, fitted by aptitude and training skilfully to influence the councils of the Powers; Root was Secretary of War, a great lawyer, a great administrator, equipped with a talent for lucid, cogent statement invaluable in the enunciation of new policies. Taft was in the Philippines, Wood in Cuba, Allen in Porto Rico. The administration of the United States

and its dependencies could not have been in safer hands.

In the Senate was a group of men worthy of the best days of the Republic: Hale and Frye of Maine, Chandler and Gallinger of New Hampshire, Proctor and Ross of Vermont, Aldrich of Rhode Island, Platt and Hawley of Connecticut, Hoar and Lodge of Massachusetts, Hanna and Foraker of Ohio, Beveridge and Fairbanks of Indiana, Cullom of Illinois, Spooner of Wisconsin, Davis and Nelson of Minnesota, Burrows and McMillan of Michigan, Allison and Gear of Iowa, Carter of Montana, Warren and Clark of Wyoming, Teller and Wolcott of Colorado, Morgan and Pettus of Alabama, Cockrell and Vest of Missouri. There were marked differences of opinion among these men, but a unity of purpose, in that thought of personal or party advantage played a minor part in their deliberations on the state of the Union. When the Fifty-sixth Congress came together, on December 4, 1899, special care was taken in the constitution of the new committees of the Senate entrusted with the consideration of legislation relating to our new possessions and dependencies.

Mr. Lodge was made Chairman of the Committee on the Philippines, Mr. Foraker on Pacific Islands and Porto Rico, Mr. Platt on Relations with Cuba. With these chairmen were grouped the ablest men in the Senate. Senator Platt's committee was peculiarly notable in its personnel. Associated with him in the work which it was recognized would be probably the most delicate and important of Congress were Aldrich, Cullom, Davis, McMillan, Chandler, Spooner, Teller, Money, Butler, and Taliaferro, the last four being representatives of the Democratic and Populist minority. It was as Chairman of this Committee,

thus scrupulously chosen, that he was to perform the work which if not the most important of his career was at least the most notable—the work which in the closing years of a useful life won him the national popular recognition which his unassuming worth had not hitherto demanded.

It was not his own wish to be Chairman of the Cuban Committee. If he could have chosen for himself he would have been placed at the head of the Committee on the Philippines. That was an assignment upon which he would have entered in a spirit of religious exaltation; for he was deeply rooted in the faith that in the acquisition of the Philippines his country had crossed the threshold of a new and greater future. In the original distribution of the chairmanships, he understood that the Philippines would be assigned to him, and it was perhaps the keenest disappointment of his political life when the Senate leaders determined that he could render better service as Chairman of the Cuban Committee. The assignment was distasteful to him. Prior to the war with Spain he was not one of those who cried unceasingly that the Cuban people should be sustained in their struggle for liberty. He acquiesced in our intervention not from any love of Cuba but solely as a duty which his own people owed to themselves and to mankind; and now he was called to the thankless task of administering the trust which that intervention had imposed upon us. He entered on the work with the modesty and conscientiousness which never failed him. There were serious problems with regard to Cuba at the best, and they were shortly to be complicated by the revelations of dishonesty among our public officials there which came to light a few months after the organization of the new committee

—revelations involving an insignificant number of American office-holders in the island, but far-reaching in their moral effect.

Most important of the questions concerning Cuba was that of the length of American occupation. Having taken the government of the island in trust, how long should we continue to hold it, and what if ever should be the manner of evacuation. Probably a great majority of the American people, as well as of American public men believed that once in Cuba we were bound to stay; that our "temporary" occupation was actually for all time, that the flag having been run up would never be hauled down. Senator Platt was not with the majority in this. He dreaded annexation—the bringing of Cuba into such relations with the United States that ultimately she would be pleading for admission to the sisterhood of States. For the stability of the Cuban people he had a profound distrust. But he looked upon them as wards for a period to be guided and guarded until they should show themselves capable of self-control. At the same time he regarded as "foolish" the Teller amendment to the resolution of intervention disclaiming "any disposition or intention to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction, or control" over the island except for its pacification. That resolution he regretted as hampering the otherwise free action of the United States.[1] He assumed the chairmanship in the

[1] The United States Government must have a policy with regard to Cuba, and that policy must be one which is the best possible under conditions as they exist. I think annexation is absolutely out of the question. In the first place the Teller resolution stands not only in the way of that, but all other actions which we might take if it had never been passed. I think I know enough of congressional sentiment to know that it is regarded as a pledge of the Government against annexation. That being out of the question

hope that sooner or later it might fall to his lot to help shape the terms of restoration, but pending such a time he realized that his committee faced a problem toward the solution of which the past experience of the United States furnished no assistance. It was to be determined how a temporary sovereignty should be exercised over territory which was in our keeping but the inhabitants of which were not of our fibre. We could not exercise full sovereignty, yet we had made ourselves responsible for the establishment and continuance of good government.

He became Chairman of the Committee on Cuban Relations on December 14, 1899, at the beginning of the first session of the Fifty-sixth Congress. We were then exercising military control over Cuba. Leonard Wood, a major-general of volunteers, appointed on December 5, 1899, had succeeded Major-General John R. Brooke as military governor on December 13th, General Brooke having been in command at Havana for one year. The military authorities were in complete control on the island excepting only that the post-office was under the direction of officials selected by the post-office department and subject to its jurisdiction.

It was providential that at the head of the committee having Cuban affairs in charge there was a trained lawyer, of long legislative experience, cautious and conscientious. It may be doubted whether any other could have been selected who would have begun at once so thorough and intelligent an inquiry into the complicated questions involved. Mr. Platt not only studied

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what next? We cannot forever remain in military occupation. We have promised them an independent government, and when that is established it seems to me we must withdraw.—Letter to E. F. Atkins, June 11, 1901.

closely all published authorities but supplemented his study by consultation with those who were most familiar with the conditions under which Cuba had come into our control. He appealed especially to the members of the American Commission which negotiated the treaty of peace at Paris. Significant of the kind of inquiry upon which he felt impelled to enter is a letter which he wrote on December 23, 1899, a few days after assuming the chairmanship of the committee, to Judge George Gray of Delaware, who as a Senator had been a member of the Peace Commission:

Forgive me if I ask you for your private opinion as to some questions that are troubling me at the outset on my assuming the duties as Chairman of the Senate Committee on our relations with Cuba.

First,—where does that thing, or contention, or right which is called "sovereignty" now rest as regards Cuba? Can the right in the very nature of things be in abeyance; can it exist in an unorganized people? If you had not rejected at Paris the contention of the Spanish commissioners that when Spain relinquished, we of necessity took the sovereignty of Cuba, I should be inclined to think as a pure legal proposition, that we did take and had a right to exercise some kind of sovereignty over the island and its people, a sovereignty certainly coupled with a self-imposed trust, and in the nature of things, temporary. But you reject that idea, though, as I read the memorandum attached to the protocols, you did not go very fully or exhaustively into the question as to where the sovereignty over Cuba did go when Spain relinquished it, but if we did not accept it from Spain, did we get a qualified or limited right of sovereignty by virtue of our military occupation? It is not from the desire to enter into an academic discussion of the question that I am seeking a solution.

We are to be immediately pressed for all sorts of legislation with reference to Cuba. If we have any kind of sovereignty there it would furnish a basis for legislation, but admitting that we have none, what basis is there for legislation with reference to the island? If our right there is only that of military occupancy for the pacification of the island, under the fourth section of the resolution which we passed, how can we legislate at all? Can we as a Congress prescribe the form, character, and limitations of the government to be established by the people of Cuba? Can we even by legislation declare who may participate in the establishment of such government; can we now create a debt which shall be binding on the island when the new government shall have been established, or grant franchises which shall run and be valid after that; or even establish customs regulations, or prescribe taxes, or do any legislative act which would be in our power if we have sovereignty there?

You will observe that the fourth section of the resolution to which I have referred disclaims any intention to exercise sovereignty except for the pacification of the island, an implication that so far as may be necessary to its pacification, we may exercise sovereignty, but how wide a meaning is to be given to that word "pacification"? Military occupation is purely an executive act, arising from conquest or treaty. The powers of government under military occupancy are broad, comprehensive, and scarcely subject to limitation. How far can Congress, the legislative branch, interfere with the executive branch of our Government in the matter of military occupancy and administration thereunder?

I notice that the attorney-general in the opinion that he gave in the matter of allowing the Commercial Cable Company the right to land its cable on the island of Cuba makes use of this language:

"While not meaning to concede that Congress by legislative act has power to restrain or control the proper exercise of the powers of the commander-in-chief of the army and

navy of the United States, occupying under the law of belligerent right, foreign territory—a question that may well be open to doubt—yet, etc."

It seems to me that the question of whether Congress may direct the Executive as to the acts which he shall perform, or order, in case of military occupation, may well be doubted.

Cuba is not a part of the United States, it does not even belong to us. For every conceivable purpose it is foreign territory, is it not? And can Congress direct the Executive in his administration of affairs of a foreign territory thus under a military occupancy, when that occupancy is by virtue of the military powers entrusted by the Constitution to him as commander-in-chief?

We did, in an Appropriation bill as you will remember, direct that no "property, franchises, or concessions of any kind whatever, shall be granted by the United States, or any military or other authority whatever, in the island of Cuba during the occupation thereof by the United States."[1] Now the very parties that wanted that legislation passed want us to repeal it as to granting franchises. I did not believe in it when it was done, but the question whether we could pass such legislation did not occur to me then.

Admitting that we have the power to direct the President in the exercise of his military authority in Cuba, must there not be some limitations on our right to do that?

I know that each one of the queries which I have propounded presents a case for the final determination of the Supreme Court of the United States. I do not expect that you will attempt to give me anything like an opinion which you would want to be bound by, but in working this thing out in my own mind, I would be mighty glad to avail myself of any suggestions that you might be willing to make to me, promising that I will treat all you say as in strict confidence, not even communicating it to the committee, or members of the committee, unless you would be willing to have me.

[1] The Foraker Amendment.

I know you must have thought of these questions while in Paris, and since then, and it is no mere idle talk when I say that I should give a great deal of weight to your conclusions, or even your impressions.

Members of the commission did not hesitate to say that by declining to have the sovereignty of Cuba relinquished to us they never thought that we escaped the responsibility of sovereignty. As one of them explained:

Spain was dealing with us. We were a party to the negotiations in which she relinquished her sovereignty, and we had then and have since retained military control to which sovereignty certainly attached.

But the working out of technical legal questions was only a small part of the task which the Cuban Committee had undertaken. There was the even more pressing and immediate practical question of the administration of the island in preparation for its ultimate independence. At the threshold those entrusted with its control were handicapped by the Foraker Amendment which, while it had the wholesome effect of relieving the administration of our dependencies from suspicion of mercenary intent, prevented the exploitation of Cuba by American capital at the very moment when her industries were ripe for encouragement. The commercial development of the island, the improvement of sociological and political conditions were all matters for which the newly organized committee felt itself in a measure responsible, and which could be dealt with far more intelligently after a personal study of local conditions. No sooner was the most pressing work of the session completed than Senator Platt obtained permission from the Senate for a subcom-

mittee to visit the island and inquire into conditions existing there. The Chairman with Senators Aldrich and Teller constituted the subcommittee which left Washington on March 14, 1900, and returned on March 31st, after spending ten days in Cuba, visiting Havana, Cienfuegos and Matanzas, interviewing politicians with regard to the character of government to be set up, conferring with representatives of banking and industrial interests, examining sugar plantations, and discussing the general situation with the military authorities. There probably never was a congressional excursion which was more completely given over to the business immediately in hand, and the Committee were able to congratulate themselves later, that in obedience to the scruples of the Chairman they had conscientiously paid their own way, declining offers of hospitality which, under conditions soon to develop, might have proved embarrassing.

It was fortunate that the visit of the Committee was made at this time, for hardly had they returned to Washington when out of a clear sky shot the bolt of scandal. Neeley and Reeves, two officials of the Cuban post-office, were found false to their trust. Their defalcation was discovered in April, 1900, through investigations set on foot by General Wood, who had been led to suspect irregularities in that part of the Government which was under the immediate control of the director-general of posts. It was the spring of a Presidential year and President McKinley was about to come up for re-election. The Democratic minority in the Senate could not be expected to let so promising an opportunity slip for making political capital.

Senator Bacon of Georgia, on May 11th, introduced a resolution directing the Committee on Relations with

Cuba to investigate and report to the Senate "as early as practicable" regarding the moneys received and expended in the island of Cuba by, through, and under the officials and representatives of the United States, both civil and military, from the date of the occupation of Cuba by the military forces of the United States until and including the 30th day of April, 1900.[1]

[1] The original Bacon resolution contained the following comprehensive provisions: "*Resolved*, That the Committee on Relations with Cuba is hereby directed to investigate and report to the Senate as early as practicable regarding the moneys received and expended in the island of Cuba, by, through, and under the officials and representatives of the United States, both civil and military, from the date of the occupation of Cuba by the military forces of the United States until and including the 30th day of April, 1900.

"Said committee shall investigate and report as to the receipts as follows: From customs; from postal service; from internal revenue; from all other sources, specifying the details as far as practicable, and particularly the places where, and dates within which said amounts were collected or received, and the officer or officers collecting and receiving the same, as well as the law or authority under which said amounts were in each instance so collected or received.

"Said committee shall investigate and report as to the expenditures of the said amounts so received, the necessity and propriety thereof, specifying in classes and in detail, so far as practicable, said expenditures, and particularly the work, services, or property for which said expenditures were made and the value thereof, also the law or authority under which each of said expenditures was made, the officer, civil or military, by whom said expenditure was authorized, and the officer, civil or military, by whom said expenditure was made, and the particular fund from which the money was taken for said expenditure.

"Said committee shall also report a statement of all public works of every kind, including buildings, wharves, railroads, and all other structures built or constructed, improved, repaired, or decorated by or under the authority of any such officer, civil, or military, and in each instance the cost, value, necessity, and propriety of the same, and the uses to which said buildings or structures have been put. Where said buildings and works were constructed or improvements were made by contract, or where the material used

At the same time, a great outcry arose over the extra allowances made to the military governor of Cuba and to others performing civil functions in the island of Cuba. The military governor received in addition to his salary as a United States officer, an allowance of $7500 a year out of the Cuban revenues. The military governor of Havana received $5000, the collector of customs, $1800, and the treasurer of the island, $1800. It was not contended that these allowances were excessive, only that they were illegal—which they were not. But whether illegal or not, the raising of a question concerning them necessitated a painstaking defence of the administration, while the introduction of Bacon's resolution on the threshold of a Presidential campaign likewise necessitated an investigation by the Senate. Mr. Platt recognized all this, although he regarded the grant of extra allowances as obviously proper, and although a Senate investigation was superfluous, as a method of arriving at the truth, in view of the fact that the original discovery of wrong-doing had been made by General Wood himself and that all those involved in peculation had been summarily dismissed and held for trial. The Senator was tired out with the work of the session and longed for rest, but he saw himself doomed

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in the same was furnished by contract, the committee shall report copies of each of said contracts and the names of all parties interested in each of the same.

"Said committee shall also report a statement of the personal property which was purchased or procured and intrusted to any officer, civil or military, in Cuba within said time, the cost and value of the same, and the uses to which said property has been put and the disposition which has been made thereof."

To this Mr. Platt offered an amendment empowering the committee to send for persons and papers, to administer oaths, to hold their sessions during the session or recess of Congress at any place they might determine, and to employ expert accountants.

immediately to the delicate and difficult task of managing in the Senate a defence of the administration and then to a wearisome and fruitless inquiry into a subject the possibilities of which had already been exhausted. It was indeed a test of his devotion to public duty.

CHAPTER XXV

CUBAN SCANDALS AND ALLOWANCES

Investigation Authorized—Speech of May 23, 1900—Longing for Home—Correspondence with General Wood.

THE closing weeks of a long session of Congress are always dreary. Senators and Representatives exhausted with the winter's vigil are eager to be away. The summer's heat of Washington is enervating and depressing. For Senator Platt this summer of the Cuban scandals was especially trying. It was his lot to be the watcher on the tower, jealously noting every changing phase of legislation. Mrs. Platt was at Kirby Corner, making the new home ready for the summer, and he was left alone in the plainly furnished rooms which served him for winter quarters at the Arlington Hotel. He longed to be through with it. As the spring foliage began to take on life, his thoughts turned toward the Litchfield hills. One Sunday he was able to spend in Judea. Once or twice he seized the opportunity to run out a few miles to Washington Grove, where a relative had a rough little summer cottage, and where he had a quiet time sitting on the porch most of the day meditating, with nobody near but his faithful colored servant, James Hurley. But all the while the birds of the Litchfield woods were singing in his ear. Every day he penned a message to Mrs.

Platt, most of which breathed a longing to be home. On May day he writes:

The leaves must be coming out, the blossoms beginning to show, the grass green, the hotbed developing lettuce and radishes, the robins building in the apple trees, and the Phœbe birds under the porch.

Again he writes:

It is a pretty picture you draw in little touches here and there—the magnolia in bloom, the velvet grass, the gray barnyard fence—it makes me think of Jerusalem, my happy home.

As the days dragged their slow length along, the yearning became more intense:

I think I know what you are doing, just starting up the lane for church. I wish I were going with you. I have a picture in my mind I can see it all, even to each vine that runs on the wall, and the flowers that grow on the Rossiter rocks by the roadside. . . . I wish we could skip these last days—so many things will go through which ought not to, and so many things will fail which ought to pass. I must keep my temper and my good nature and not allow myself to be disagreeable because I can't have my own way. . . . How little we can foresee what we can do. I had been looking forward to a rest this summer, and now this Cuban business comes in to disturb my mind and take up my time—how much of it, I don't know. Then comes the Presidential election. So I don't see much rest ahead—mental rest at all events.

Again he cries:

I want to go fishing. But each day here has its special duties, and it is really hard to get away without letting something pass which ought not to pass. To-morrow it is the Boer resolution. What it will be Monday I don't know; but it will be something. You need n't be afraid

that I will break down. I think that I live and thrive on work.

All this time with his thoughts turned homeward Senator Platt was faithful to the drudgery of his trust. He knew that the administration must depend upon him and perhaps one other for its defence against Democratic attacks. The brief letters jotted down in those days—sometimes in his room at the hotel, sometimes at his desk in the Senate chamber, give an intimate insight into the developments week by week. A few excerpts will serve to show how the responsibilities weighed on his mind:

April 26, 1900:

I am full of the President's defence on the Cuban allowances now. It is right that I should do it, and when I look the Senate over there seems to be no one to do it, or I might say that can do it, except Spooner and myself. Perhaps there may be no occasion for it, but on such things one has to be always ready for what may come.

May 17:

This Cuban stealing business is making me lots of trouble. We have got to let the Bacon resolution pass. And then we must investigate—that is, I must. Who will help me I don't know. It is an onerous task. The Cuban scandal is really bad and mortifying. The Democrats and Populists are making all they can of it and the worst is they have too much ground to go on.

May 18:

Last evening I went over to the War Department and spent the time until midnight talking over Cuban affairs.

May 19:

What disturbs me more than anything else is the disclosures which come out about Cuban affairs. They seem

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worse and worse. I don't know that we shall ever get to the bottom of them.

May 20:

Have been worrying about Cuban affairs. You don't know how embarrassed I am. The New York *World* and New York *Journal* are full of it to-day, with scare headlines, portraits, reasons, suspicions, etc. I confess I do not know how to treat the matter. It is not easy. Spooner and I have got to make the best of it. Well, no matter! I shall live it through, and I shall take care of the administration.

May 22, 11.00 P.M.

I have thought and thought and worried as to what I should say about this Cuban matter. The things which come to light each day make what I had thought of saying unwise. So I have to change my tactics every morning; and when I shall say something I presume the lively capers of the next day will make it entirely out of place and inadmissible. But I must do it to-morrow. Can't wait any longer. I am making no notes. As usual I must trust to luck. Hope I shall sleep well to-night and be fresh in the morning.

May 23, 11.00 P.M.:

I 've done it. Good, bad, or indifferent, my speech is off my hands, if not off my mind. I 'm not satisfied with it; others pretend they are. It was a hard speech to make, but I did as well as I could. It tired me though. Spooner and I had the day to ourselves. He was magnificent. I wish I could speak as well as he.

May 24:

Spooner made a magnificent speech. He easily eclipses me, but I am not envious. I help him and rejoice in it. He is going home just as soon as he gets his speech in the record, and will not come back. Then I shall have it all

alone, and no one to help carry my burden. It 's foolish to think I *have* a burden, but I can't help it. I did look forward to rest and comfort at home after adjournment; but I don't know what this Cuban investigation will bring forth.

The speech of May 23d, in spite of his misgivings was one of the most effective he ever made in the Senate. He did not deny or condone the offence of the recreant American officials who had brought the Cuban scandal upon the administration:

> The Senator from Georgia has no monopoly of the humiliation, indignation, and shame which should be and are felt by every honest and patriotic man in the United States. The disclosures in Cuba are shocking. They strike a blow, and a direct blow at every citizen of the United States. If the defalcation of Mr. Neeley had occurred in Boston or New York or Washington, it would have been a sad and shameful affair, but it would not have been so sad and shameful as when it occurs in a country under our guardianship, for the administration of whose affairs with honesty and economy we are responsible, not only to the people of Cuba but to ourselves and the world as well. Nothing that has occurred in the history of defalcations has made such an impression upon the public mind as this, and justly so; and more than in any other case is it incumbent upon the Government to probe this to the very bottom, unsparingly, unceasingly, without hesitation, without reference to who may be complicated or concerned.

But he was indignant that what had really occurred, shameful as it was, should be amplified and exaggerated and seized upon for the purpose of a political campaign to convince the people that our administration in Cuba

was disgracefully lax and dishonest throughout. He dwelt upon the fact that General Wood had discovered the irregularities and taken steps to punish them; he went in great detail into the administration of the island; he compared the expenditures in Cuba with the expenditures in states and municipalities of the United States; he declared that the extra allowances were necessary unless we proposed to treat our officers in Cuba charged with the administration of civil affairs "with a parsimony and meanness which would bring the blush of shame to the cheek of every American citizen."

Senator Bacon had asked what the United States was doing in Cuba; what our authority was for being there, and why we did not come away. To this Mr. Platt replied:

> We are there because the American people, acting through Congress, directed the President of the United States, as commander-in-chief of the armies and navies of the United States, to go to Cuba and destroy the power of Spain there. That is why we are there.
>
> I agree that the situation in Cuba is unique, that history does not furnish a parallel, that no precisely similar case has been treated by writers upon international law, that our relations there must be determined upon general principles and the necessity of the situation.
>
> Mr. President, I was not in favor of the war with Spain. I believed that it might have been avoided with honor and with the security of freedom to the island of Cuba. But the American people said "NO"; and when, by accident or design, the good ship *Maine*, with its American sailors on board, was blown into the air, and its sailors found a grave in the harbor of Havana, there was no power on earth that could prevent the war. When that war was declared, I accepted the consequences. I thought I saw then more

clearly than a good many of the people who were urging us on in hot haste to engage in war.

I thought I saw that if we turned Spain out of Cuba we would become responsible not only to Spain and the Cuban people but to ourselves and to the whole world for the proper administration of the affairs of Cuba and the erection of a proper Republican Government there. We have a duty to perform in Cuba yet, as we had a supposed duty to perform when we went there to free the people of Cuba. That duty is not yet discharged. The American people will see to it that that duty is fully and completely discharged, as much as they saw that its performance was begun.

What is that duty? It is that our only right to be in Cuba is because in the resolution of intervention the fourth paragraph said this:

"Fourth: That the United States hereby disclaims any disposition or intention to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction, or control over said island except for the pacification thereof, and asserts its determination, when that is accomplished, to leave the government and control of the island to its people."

It is said that is our only warrant for being there; that we are self-constituted agents for the purpose of the pacification of the island, with a duty to leave the moment that pacification is accomplished. Well, there is a little more than that, Mr. President. . . . There was war with Spain, and a portion of Spain was conquered. Then we had a preliminary treaty of peace, and by that treaty of peace we came, as the conquerors, into possession of the island of Cuba, and by that treaty of peace we agreed to do something, too. Article I of that treaty says:

"Article I. Spain relinquishes all claim of sovereignty over and title to Cuba.

"And as the island is, upon its evacuation by Spain, to be occupied by the United States, the United States will, so long as such occupation shall last, assume and dis-

charge the obligations that may under international law result from the fact of its occupation, for the protection of life and property."

That was our agreement with Spain. Why did we make it? Because the ambassador of France, in negotiating the protocol, insisted upon it; that is why that was inserted in the treaty of peace with Spain. . . .

Up to the time of the evacuation by Spain our occupancy was a military occupancy, and was so recognized by the treaty. When the evacuation was made and the property turned over to us, it was turned over to the military authorities. . . . That occupation will cease to be a military occupation when, under that military occupation, an opportunity shall have been given to the people of Cuba to set up for themselves a government to which we may turn over the island and to which we may leave the government and control of the island.

What does "pacification" mean in that clause? Does it mean merely the establishment of nominal and formal peace? Does it mean so soon as hostilities ceased our troops were to be withdrawn and the island left to all the contentions and factions which existed there? No, Mr. President; we became responsible for something else than mere nominal peace in the island of Cuba. We became responsible for the establishment of a government there, which we would be willing to indorse to the people of the world—a stable government, a government for which we would be willing to be responsible in the eyes of the world. Until that time occurs, no patriotic American will ask that our troops and our government be withdrawn from the island of Cuba.

His concluding words were impressive:

Mr. President, I have spoken longer than I intended on this subject. I repeat what I said at first, that the charges by way of insinuation, innuendo, rumor, scandal, and mud throwing, have made it necessary that this investigation should go on; and whatever of personal discomfort may

be encountered, I am willing to accept it, and, so far as I am concerned, to promise that nothing shall be covered up; that everything shall be brought to the light of day; that the keen sunlight of publicity shall be turned upon the administration in Cuba; and, Mr. President, I entertain a confidence, which is not to be shaken until the facts shall shake it, that when that investigation has been concluded it will definitely appear that we have been regaled with grossest exaggerations and with the most uncalled for suspicions; and that we shall find that our army officers now, as ever, can be trusted, and are honest and upright, and that our civil officers may also be trusted as upright men, although it unfortunately appears that some of them have now gone so wickedly and lamentably astray.

The resolutions were adopted and he prepared to devote himself for weary months to a distasteful task, involving exhaustive hearings and painstaking reports. It was over a year before the Committee completed its work, after calling on the departments involved for detailed reports covering almost every conceivable transaction: and it was not until March 15, 1901, that the Secretary of War sent to the Committee the last information called for by the resolution of investigation, so that the final report could be made.

In the meantime Mr. Platt at the request of General Wood had taken up other questions relating to the government of the island. General Wood was especially urgent that there should no longer be a division of control in Cuba and that the entire administration should be in the hands of the military authorities. Writing to him on May 31, 1900, Mr. Platt said:

I thoroughly agree with you in your suggestion that you ought to have undivided control in Cuba and I had seen the President about your office before I received your letter

and since. I think he intends to put the postal matters under your control, but he wants to do it in a way and at a time when it will not appear to the country as it if were a reflection on the postmaster-general. I do not know just what he will do or how he will do it. I fear he will try to make a sort of double headed arrangement which will still be under the Post-Office Department. I am going to keep the matter before him, however. I suppose you get the *Congressional Record* and have kept track of the talk we have had in Congress and especially in the Senate which has resulted in ordering an investigation by our Committee. The stealings have been very unfortunate and have only been relieved from working a great deal of dissension politically by the fact that they were discovered and exposed by you, and the public having confidence that you will follow them up and will not tolerate any crookedness anywhere. The whole Congress is nervous and liable to take the bits in its teeth and say we ought to get out of Cuba, and it requires a steady hand to keep things straight now in the last days of this session. We hope to adjourn on the 6th of June, and if we can accomplish it matters will be comparatively safe. I think we shall now, and that the pressure of other things is going to prevent any action whatever with reference to Cuban affairs beyond the investigation which has been ordered and which will have to go on during the recess.

I had fully intended at the close of the session to propose a modification of the Foraker amendment, but, to tell the truth, I do not dare to do it now. The Democrats are seeking every possible opportunity to charge, and, where they cannot charge they insinuate, that everything is wrong in Cuba, that while frauds have appeared only in the postal system the military government has been characterized by extravagant expenditure. As to the latter, they have made very little impression, however, but, if we proposed now to modify the Foraker amendment, it would be seized upon by them as an evidence that political friends are going

to have an opportunity to exploit schemes and plans for their profit and advantage, and bring up again this whole Cuban discussion and more of it, and would point to it as an evidence that we did not intend to leave the island and were only planning to continue occupancy indefinitely. I have talked to Senator Foraker about it and, while he believes the amendment ought to be modified, he agrees with me that it is a mighty bad time to bring it up. Of course, you can go along the same way until the next session of Congress when the Presidential election will be past and all this unquiet and nervous condition will have gone by, and we can discuss the merits of the situation without any reference to the political advantage; in other words, when reason will have resumed its sway.

I realize your embarrassment and the tremendous responsibility placed upon you and the difficult problem you have to work out, and my idea is that the thing to do at this time is to keep quiet. They have not shaken confidence in you to any extent and I do not believe they will. Just how fast or far we shall progress with this investigation, or whether we shall have to visit Cuba and make inquiries there, I am unable to say. We want to pursue the investigation honestly and thoroughly, believing that everything that is now disclosed will justify your conduct there and give evidence to the people that you are faithfully and wisely bringing about the independence which we have promised to Cuba. If we had made no promise there would be I think a strong annexation sentiment among the business people of the United States and of belief that our promise of pacification included the establishment of a government which should be a republic in fact as well as in name, and with which we should have such relations as would safeguard and protect not only the interests of Cuba, but our own interests with relation thereto.

The accumulation of unwelcome tasks meant months of dismal drudgery to Senator Platt. Just how great

a sacrifice it all was to him may be gleaned from his correspondence. Congress adjourned the last week in June, and he hurried home to Judea for such rest as he could get. Writing from there to John H. Flagg he says:

My summer seems already broken up. I have to enjoy this place thinking about it when I am far away from it. If there is anything that will bring you health, enjoyment, and happiness it is this Litchfield County life. I have read first and last a good many entertaining disquisitions on where the Garden of Eden was located, but it seems strange that in all the places that have been claimed for it between the North and South Poles, no one has ever said Litchfield County, but I am sure that this was the original paradise. Norfolk is rather on the outer edge of it. Washington, and especially the Judea end of Washington, was right in the centre of the garden. I do not think that the tree of knowledge of good and evil where Eve cut up such a prank at the instance of Old Nick was just hereabouts. I think she must have wandered out of the garden a little to find the tree; for every tree here is pleasant to the sight and good for food.

But that summer was to be a busy one, with little in it of the peace of Judea. Not only was he burdened with the work of analyzing Cuban finances but he was called upon as usual to bear his part in the Presidential campaign which resulted in the election of McKinley and Roosevelt. When he returned to Washington at the beginning of the short session in December he was weary rather than rested by this summer's absence; but the session upon which he was about to enter proved to be one of the most exhausting, as it was perhaps the most momentous of his entire career.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE PLATT AMENDMENT

Establishing a New Republic—Conferences of Cuban Committee—The Question of Authorship.

IN the fall of 1900, the emancipated Cuban people had their first opportunity to show their capacity for self-government. Having been subject for two years to the military control of the United States they were at last in the judgment of General Wood and the administration at Washington so well settled under new conditions that they might properly be entrusted with the setting up of governmental machinery of their own. The course of the United States in the island had been an example for mankind. We had freed its inhabitants from oppression and furnished its starving people with food; we had remodelled its cities and introduced systems of sanitation, where filth had prevailed for centuries; we had stamped out the plague of yellow fever; we had established a school system and set the feet of the people in the way of orderly advancement; we had restored them to their peaceful occupations and protected them in their industrial rights. In the words of Senator Platt we had brought order out of chaos, tranquillity out of horror, happiness out of misery; we had stamped out pestilence, substituted education for ignorance, and grafted as rapidly as possible the spirit of American institutions upon a corrupt

civilization. We had done for Cuba what no nation on earth ever did for a conquered province.

Yet all this was in preparation not for the territorial aggrandizement of the United States but for the creation of a new nationality, the establishment of an independent republic. All the preliminaries to such a result were consequently carried into effect.

A census of the population was taken; municipal elections were held and municipal governments established; the conditions of suffrage were prescribed, and finally on July 25, 1900, President McKinley ordered an election of delegates to frame a constitution. Carrying out the implied obligations assumed in the treaty of peace, it was provided in the order initiating the constitutional convention that the delegates in framing a constitution should "as a part thereof provide for and agree with the Government of the United States upon the relations to exist between that Government and the government of Cuba."

The convention thus chosen assembled at Havana on the first Monday of November, 1900. It was controlled by the most radical element of the Cuban electorate. Its leaders represented the revolutionary and reactionary faction, irresponsible as children, jealous of outside influences, dazzled with the prospect of at last being their own masters. For three months they were in session, doing their work without interference or suggestion from Washington, but not without close observation by the leaders there.

In due time it appeared that the general features of the new constitution had been agreed upon. There was not a line expressing obligation, gratitude, or even friendliness to the United States, not a word of recognition either of the service rendered by this Government

or of our interest in the island's future. It was plainly the short-sighted plan of the delegates to submit to Congress, before adjournment on March 4th, a constitution ignoring altogether the question of the future relations between the two countries, relying on Congress to recognize the constitution and direct the withdrawal of American troops, leaving the Cubans to do as they might please in establishing new relations.

As this purpose dawned gradually on the leaders of the Senate, they began to consider whether legislation should not be undertaken immediately to determine our future relations. It was the short session of Congress, and the threatened filibuster against the shipping bill made it extremely doubtful whether any measures except the regular supply bills could be enacted. Mr. Platt as Chairman of the Committee on Cuban Relations was the responsible leader to whom others looked for guidance. For a time he feared that it would not be possible to enact in so short a time legislation of such far-reaching consequence and he was inclined to leave President McKinley to deal as best he could with Cuba, calling Congress together in extraordinary session, if need be, before withdrawing United States troops and turning the island over to its own people. But as time went on and the unreasonableness of the Cuban Convention became more apparent, he determined at last to make the attempt at shaping the necessary law before the 4th of March. Accordingly on January 30, 1901, he sent the following note to the Republican members of the Committee:

I think it very important that the Republican members of the Committee on Relations with Cuba should have an informal conference, and therefore ask that you will meet

with other Republican members at Senator Chandler's house at three o'clock Sunday afternoon.

In Senator Chandler's diary for February 3d, is this laconic entry:

At 3 O. H. Platt, Aldrich, McMillan, Spooner, and Cullom called (1421 I street) and we talked of Cuban affairs.

One week later there is the further entry:

At 2 Platt, McMillan, Aldrich, Cullom, and Spooner at my house, on Cuba.

Of what was said at these meetings there is no official record, but Mr. Chandler has given his recollection of the first conference:

There was free talk concerning the conditions which the United States would wish to ask of Cuba and which we hoped the sensitiveness of the Cuban people would not keep them from acceding to. There being a fear that Cuba might not like to incorporate into the body of her free constitution any clauses giving rights to another country, it was agreed that it would be best to propose that our conditions if not inserted in the constitution should be recited in "an ordinance appended thereto." It was easily agreed that we must insist upon the continued maintenance by Cuba of all the sanitary arrangements to prevent the spread of disease which had been made during our occupancy, these being considered as of vital importance to the United States as well as Cuba. The danger that the newly liberated people would plunge recklessly in debt was the most serious subject of conversation. The tendency in such cases was adverted to, and we all quickly agreed that there must be some provision that Cuba should not run into debt beyond her means to pay. The danger that in such an event the money would be borrowed in Europe and that in default of payment European Powers would threaten to occupy Cuba was comprehended. Every provision that could be

thought of as desirable and that was afterwards adopted was discussed. It was readily agreed that Cuba should be asked to consent that the United States might intervene to preserve the independence of Cuba and good order and freedom throughout the new republic. At the last I ventured to say that if conditions were formulated and proposed by Congress we ought to add that Cuba should issue to the United States one hundred millions of four per cent. fifty-year bonds as a partial compensation for the expenses of our war to liberate the island from bondage to Spain. Mr. Spooner promptly objected and said that it would not do for us to demand money from Cuba as the price of our services in giving to her freedom. I assented to the idea that we might not insist upon the reimbursement but said that I thought that as Cuba would give careful consideration to all our requests, it might be well to suggest to her people the absolute justice of a money payment. Is it not good policy in formulating our proposition to include something which, although just and fair, may be surrendered if objection is made to our plan as a whole? But Mr. Spooner, with his unsophistical nature, failed to comprehend these tactics and did not consent to them.

No plan at this conference was placed upon paper. The general feeling was that it would be difficult to secure action by Congress and that the Democratic members of the Committee would probably oppose and delay and thus defeat any plan which we might offer to them.

There was further informal talk among members of the Committee, and Mr. Platt was in daily conference with the President and the Secretary of War. It was finally determined that as an independent measure would stand little chance of enactment in the few days remaining of the session, it would be necessary to attach the legislation to one of the great Appropriation bills in order to insure action before the 4th of March.

There was considerable apprehension in regard to the attitude of the Democratic members of the Committee. Were they to show a disposition to play for political position they could easily at that stage of the proceedings by dilatory tactics prevent action before the 4th of March and thus force an extraordinary session of Congress to the embarrassment of the majority leaders and of the administration. Greatly to the relief of Senator Platt and other Republicans, an intimation came, at the critical moment, from the minority members of the Committee that no serious opposition would be offered to the proposed measure. This patriotic attitude of Senators Teller, Money, Butler, and Taliaferro, was frequently referred to gratefully by Senator Platt in later years.

The final drafting of the resolution as is usually the case in the work of a legislative committee was left in the hands of the chairman, and Senator Platt in consultation with that master of parliamentary phraseology, Senator Spooner, prepared the Amendment as it now stands.

When the measure had been given its lasting form by Platt and Spooner, a formal meeting of the Cuban Relations Committee was called, and, by resolution of the Committee adopted on February 25th. Senator Platt on the same day submitted the following amendment to the Army Appropriation bill:

> That in fulfilment of the declaration contained in the joint resolution approved April 20, 1898, entitled: "For the recognition of the independence of the people of Cuba, demanding that the government of Spain relinquish its authority and government in the island of Cuba, and withdraw its land and naval forces from Cuba and Cuban waters, and directing the President of the United States

to use the land and naval forces of the United States to carry these resolutions into effect," the President is hereby authorized to "leave the government and control of the island of Cuba to its people" so soon as a government shall have been established in said island under a constitution which, either as a part thereof or in an ordinance appended thereto, shall define the future relations of the United States with Cuba, substantially as follows:

I.

That the government of Cuba shall never enter into any treaty or other compact with any foreign power or powers which will impair or tend to impair the independence of Cuba, nor in any manner authorize or permit any foreign power or powers to obtain by colonization or for military or naval purposes or otherwise, lodgment in nor control over any portion of said island.

II.

That said government shall not assume or contract any public debt, to pay the interest upon which, and to make reasonable sinking fund provision for the ultimate discharge of which, the ordinary revenues of the island, after defraying the current expenses of government shall be inadequate.

III.

That the government of Cuba consents that the United States may exercise the right to intervene for the preservation of Cuban independence, the maintenance of a government adequate for the protection of life, property and individual liberty, and for discharging the obligations with respect to Cuba imposed by the treaty of Paris on the United States, now to be assumed and undertaken by the government of Cuba.

IV.

That all acts of the United States in Cuba during its military occupancy thereof are ratified and validated, and all lawful rights acquired thereunder shall be maintained and protected.

V.

That the government of Cuba will execute, and as far as necessary extend, the plans already devised or other plans to be mutually agreed upon for the sanitation of the cities of the island, to the end that a recurrence of epidemic and infectious diseases may be prevented, thereby assuring protection to the people and commerce of Cuba, as well as to the commerce of the southern ports of the United States and the people residing therein.

VI.

That the Isle of Pines shall be omitted from the proposed constitutional boundaries of Cuba, the title thereto being left to future adjustment by treaty.

VII.

That to enable the United States to maintain the independence of Cuba, and to protect the people thereof, as well as for its own defence, the government of Cuba will sell or lease to the United States lands necessary for coaling or naval stations at certain specified points, to be agreed upon with the President of the United States.

VIII.

That by way of further assurance the government of Cuba will embody the foregoing provisions in a permanent treaty with the United States.

The Amendment was adopted on February 27th, by a vote of 43 to 20—a strict party division. There was

hardly a word of debate on the floor of the Senate, members of the Committee purposely refraining from speech, on account of the necessity for speedy action at that late hour in the session, while the minority with a few exceptions were content to confine their opposition to the recording of their votes, although had the Amendment been offered as a separate measure it would probably never have reached a vote. The House accepted the Amendment promptly, and on March 2d it became a law.

The Cuban Convention was in no hurry to incorporate the terms of the Amendment in the constitution which was in process of construction. Many of its members suspected the motives of the United States. The question arose as to whether the adoption of the Amendment would leave Cuba an independent state; whether the third clause did not in effect establish a protectorate or suzerainty on the part of the United States. In April a Committee of Delegates appeared in Washington to lay these doubts before the Secretary of War and to find out whether in the event of Cuba's compliance she could expect reciprocal trade relations with the United States. As to the question regarding independence Secretary Root consulted with Senator Platt who replied as follows:

The Amendment was carefully drafted with a view to avoid any possible claim that its acceptance by the Cuban Constitutional Convention would result in the establishment of a protectorate or suzerainty, or in any way interfere with the independence of Cuba, and speaking for myself, it seems impossible that any such construction can be placed upon that clause. I think the Amendment must be considered as a whole, and it must be evident upon its reading that its well-defined purpose is to secure and safe-

guard Cuban independence and to establish at the outset a definite understanding of the friendly disposition of the United States towards the Cuban people, and its expressed intention to assist them, if necessary, in the maintenance of such independence.

These are my views, and though, as you suggest, I cannot speak for the whole Congress, my belief is that such purpose was well understood by that body.[1]

[1] In an article which appeared in the *World's Work* for May, 1901, only a few weeks after the adjournment of Congress and a little while before the Cuban Constitutional Convention had concluded its work and accepted the terms of the United States, Senator Platt thus stated the case:

"Two solutions only are possible. One, the annexation of the island by the United States; the other, the establishment of an independent republic there in which the vital and just interests both of Cuba and the United States shall be defined and maintained.

"The project of annexation may, and ought to be, dismissed. It should not for a moment be considered except in case of the direst necessity. The people of Cuba, by reason of race and characteristics, cannot be easily assimilated by us. In these respects they have little in common with us. Their presence in the American union, as a state, would be most disturbing, and we have already asserted, as the deliberate conclusion of Congress, that they ought to be free and independent. There is nothing to be gained, much, even honor, to be lost, by the annexation of Cuba.

"The real question, then, is, how can an independent republic be established there under conditions and circumstances which shall best subserve the interests of the people both of Cuba and of the United States? That our people have interests in Cuba which must be subserved and protected, goes without saying. We can not, and will not, permit any European Power, much less a hostile or unfriendly Power, to acquire rights or privileges in Cuba to our disadvantage. The essence of the Monroe Doctrine asserted, and justly insisted upon for nearly eighty years, forbids it. Nor can the United States permit the existence of a government in Cuba in which peace and order, the protection of life and property, and the maintenance of all international obligations are not observed. In respect to the future government of Cuba our interests and those of the Cuban people are identical; the government of Cuba must be stable, as well as republican in form. Again, our

Sufficient assurances were also given in regard to reciprocity, and finally after much backing and filling the convention in June accepted the terms in such form as to satisfy the administration. In writing to a member of the Convention, while the acceptance was still

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obligations to the world at large, created and assumed by the act of intervention, demand of us that we become responsible both for the character and maintenance of the new government. If duty required us to see to it that Cuba was free, duty equally requires us to see to it that the Cuba of the future shall be both peaceful and prosperous. . . .

"We cannot, if we would, honorably relieve ourselves from our treaty obligations to see that the life and property of Spaniards and those Cubans who did not join in the revolution are protected by the new government. Perfunctory advice to that government will not meet the full measure of our obligation. Our work was only half done when Cuba was liberated from its oppressor. A nation which undertakes to put an end to bad government in a neighboring country must also see that just and good government follows. Nations have duties to perform as well as interests to guard and protect, a truth which it is encouraging to note is being better understood throughout the world now than ever before. From the high plane of duty alone, not less than by self-interest, the United States is committed to the maintenance of good government in Cuba, and its policy must first of all be determined by this consideration. It can not escape responsibility; it must meet it manfully. . . .

"The conditions thus proposed by Congress are as manifestly in the interest of Cuba as of the United States. The keynote of these propositions is that Cuba shall be and remain independent under a stable republican government which the United States will assist in maintaining against foreign aggression or domestic disorder. Cuba needs this, because it will be practically powerless either to repel foreign aggression or to maintain peace and order at home if the turbulence of the past shall reappear.

"The new government of Cuba will have neither an army nor a navy. There are something like six millions of dollars of Spanish bonds outstanding, for which the revenues of Cuba were pledged at the time of their issue. These bonds are held largely in Germany and France. It is entirely probable that Cuba being left without any means of defence, these governments on behalf of their citizens would demand and endeavor to enforce their assumption. Cuba's

pending, Senator Platt thus expressed himself on the question of independence:

I cannot help thinking that there has been some misunderstanding about the purpose of my Amendment. It seemed to me impossible that it could be taken as limiting Cuban independence. The preamble declares that it is to carry out the so-called Teller resolution. It recognizes Cuban independence in terms in three of the clauses and indirectly, in the other four. In two of the clauses it speaks of treaties to be made, and we certainly make treaties only with independent governments. The clause relating

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only guarantee against this will be the fact that any nation attempting to compel it to pay this indebtedness will understand that it has the United States to deal with. Between revolutionists and Spaniards and Cubans who were loyal to Spain there is little love. With no army to repress disorder, it is certainly within the limit of reasonable probability that the revolutionary and turbulent party may attempt the destruction or confiscation of Spanish and Cuban property which the new government would be utterly powerless to prevent. We most certainly owe a duty to our own citizens in Cuba that they shall be protected in the enjoyment of their property and kept free from the dangers which attend revolutionary uprisings. Indeed, any one who knows public sentiment in Cuba is aware that it is expected by Cuban people that if difficulty, either foreign or domestic, shall arise, the United States will be called upon to meet it. Even those who insist that nothing should be put into the Constitution recognizing our right to do so, say that the United States will do it as a matter of course. . . . The United States needs this mutual arrangement because, for its own defence, it cannot permit any foreign power to dominate, control, or obtain a foothold in this hemisphere or its adjacent territory, and cannot tolerate such revolutions or disorders upon an island so near our coast, as frequently occur in southern American republics; more than all, because it stands pledged in honor to its own citizens, to the citizens of Cuba, and to all the world to maintain quiet and peace and good government in Cuba. In a word, Cuba needs self-government, peace, tranquillity and prosperity. The United States asks for nothing more than this, but it recognizes its obligation and insists upon its right to see that such results are to be permanently secured."

to sanitation involves an agreement between two equally independent powers, and the ratification of the acts of the military government can only be by an independent power. So each clause of the resolution is based upon the idea not only that Cuba was to be independent but that the United States recognized that fact. All that we ask is that Cuba shall assent to our right to help her maintain her independence and to protect our own interests. Of course we can only determine treaty relations with an independent and fully established government. The very first step at reciprocal trade relations is the establishment of the Cuban government. No one man can speak for the future action of his nation, but I can say this that I find in the United States but one sentiment and that is that as soon as Cuba shall have put herself in the proper position to make a commercial treaty there will be every disposition to agree to trade relations which shall be for the benefit of both countries. There may be different ideas as to the precise terms of such a treaty, both here and in Cuba, but that we will strive for the same end, namely trade relations which shall be for the advantage of both nations, I cannot for a moment doubt. I have felt that the Cuban people have seen and understood this all the while.

To an American resident of Cuba, he had this to say:

Personally, I was in favor of very much more stringent measures requiring much more as to our future relations, but in legislation you have got to consider the preponderance of public sentiment. As you say, it is difficult enough to bring those Cuban delegates to an acceptance of the terms we propose. If we had proposed more stringent terms, we should not only have had that difficulty vastly increased but we should have had a party in the United States and in Congress giving aid and comfort to the Cuban radicals. My own judgment is that when they conceded to us the right of intervention and naval stations, as set forth in the Amendment, the United States gets an effective

and moral position which may become something more than a moral position and which will prevent trouble there. It is easy to say that we ought to insist on more, it was impossible to pass through Congress anything more drastic than we did. It is a mistake, if I may say so, for the people of Cuba who are conservative and who have property interests to be cared for to refuse to exert their influence to make the new government of Cuba what it ought to be. I think I recognize all the difficulties of the situation, but it does seem to me that the able, forceful, and conservative men of Cuba must do something to help themselves and I think they will finally see this. At any rate, the United States will always, under the so-called Platt Amendment, be in a position to straighten out things if they get seriously bad. I see nothing for it except to try the experiment of an independent republican government in Cuba, and, while I see the dangers, I think we may hope some day that the experiment will be fairly successful.[1]

At the time of its adoption it was recognized generally that Senator Platt had been the principal force in Congress behind the Amendment, which naturally became identified with his name, but long after its enactment and when it had become recognized as one of the epoch-making documents of the country's history the question was raised as to its real authorship. This question is bound to arise always in cases where more than one person is entrusted with the formulation of papers embodying a general determination. In the *Review of Reviews* for January, 1903, appeared a laudatory article by Walter Wellman on the work of Secretary Root in the Cabinet in which occurred the following passage:

The solution of the relations of the United States to the new nation—a solution which not only assured that a Cuban

[1] Letter to E. F. Atkins, June 11, 1901.

republic should come into being, but that it should be preserved under the sheltering wing of the great American eagle; a solution so statesmanlike, so obviously a work of the highest genius, that it must long serve as a model—was embodied in what is known as the Platt Amendment. Well, Mr. Root was the author of the Platt Amendment. He wrote it, almost verbatim as it stands to-day, in a letter of instructions to General Wood for that officer's guidance in dealing with the Cuban Constitutional Convention. It was afterward submitted to the Senate Committee on Cuba, of which that really great Senator, Mr. Platt of Connecticut, is Chairman, and, after slight modification, was placed upon the statutes by Congress, and ratified in the constitution of the new republic. Thus Mr. Root not only created, formed, moulded, trained, nursed, shaped the Cuban nation, but wrote with his own hand its Magna Charta.

This paragraph was widely copied and aroused considerable discussion. In commenting on it a friendly writer in the Hartford *Courant* said:

Our Mr. Platt no doubt could have written the Platt Amendment had it been necessary; but he also apparently was a strong man to know the right thing, and to back it up by his parliamentary skill, when he found that another hand had already substantially turned the right provisions into words. An amendment written by Secretary Root and passed into law by Orville H. Platt ought to be as nearly the proper and safe thing as human legislation can be.

It was not Senator Platt's custom to make use of the newspapers to advance his own claims for political credit, and he did not enter a controversy even when there was a possibility of his being deprived of the tiny meed of credit which had come to him after a generation of great public service almost devoid of general

public recognition. He could not let the statement in Mr. Wellman's article go entirely unchallenged, however, among his friends, and when he saw this reference in his own home paper he wrote to Charles Hopkins Clark, the editor, a personal friend of many years' standing:

January 1, 1904.

My dear Mr. Clark:

Referring to the *Courant* of December 31st, and the reviews of magazine articles, I find that Walter Wellman thinks that Secretary Root wrote with his own hand what is known as the "Platt Amendment," and that after quoting Mr. Wellman your book-review man thinks that I could have written it if it had been necessary, etc.

It is not a matter that I care enough about to make any issue of it, but Mr. Wellman is a little off. The letter of instructions to General Wood was written by Secretary Root after the Platt Amendment had been much considered by the Republican members of the Cuban Committee. The original draft was my own, and contained substantially the terms on which the withdrawal of American forces was to take place, as shown in the instructions to Wood. It was changed from time to time, somewhat in language but not in spirit, in consultations both with the Republicans of the Committee, President McKinley, and Secretary Root. A final consultation between myself and Senator Spooner put the document in its complete form.

I make this statement, not for publication, but simply for your own information.

Very truly yours,
O. H. Platt.

Mr. Clark felt that the information contained in this letter should be made public and accordingly he wrote to ask permission to print it in such a way that Senator Platt's connection with the publication would not be

known. It is related that when this request came in the mail, the Senator's secretary, who had seen the original draft of the Amendment in the Senator's own handwriting in pencil with occasional interlineations, asked, "Why not permit Mr. Clark or some one to tell the truth about this?" He looked up quickly and replied seriously and with emphasis:

What difference does it make who wrote the Platt Amendment so long as it serves the purpose intended? Just let us be quiet; it will all blow over and there will be nothing about it in a week.

Then he dictated a dispatch telling Mr. Clark on no account to publish anything concerning him in regard to the Platt Amendment, and followed it up with a letter in which he said:

I do not wish to get into the newspapers about the magazine article written by Wellman. I cannot do it now anyway, because a statement of my connection with the Platt Amendment would need to be carefully made from dates and documents, and I have no time for it at present. I may some day do it for my own satisfaction, *but, above all things*, I do not want any newspaper or magazine exploitation of it, which would do me no good, and by this time the whole matter has been forgotten, so please do not say anything about it in the *Courant*. Some time I will tell you the whole story.

John H. Flagg wrote him:

I have read Walter Wellman's article on Root in the current number of the *Review of Reviews*, wherein he states unqualifiedly that Root and not you was the author of the so-called "Platt Amendment." Is this statement true? I as well as your countless friends had taken peculiar satisfaction in believing you to have been its author, and I have never seen any other claim asserted until now.

In the course of his reply to this letter Senator Platt said:

It (the Platt Amendment) started with an original draft of four propositions by me, submitted to President McKinley and Secretary Root. It was the subject of many conversations with Mr. Root, and many consultations between the Republican members of the Senate Committee. Its final draft was the work of myself and Senator Spooner. While these consultations were going on, Secretary Root gave the order to General Wood, stating what the President insisted upon, and that is all there is to it. The meat of the whole thing was in my original propositions, long anterior to the issuance of the order.

The propositions referred to are probably the following, which are found in typewritten form among Mr. Platt's papers, with the pencilled memorandum at the head, in his own hand: "Proposition submitted to the President by me":

Provisions which should be incorporated in the Cuban constitution:

I.

Ratification of the acts of the government of military occupation, and the protection of interests acquired thereunder.

II.

The right of intervention to maintain the independence of Cuba, for the protection of life and property therein, its permanent pacification, and the stability of its government.

III.

Naval stations, and a force necessary for their maintenance.

IV.

Supervision of treaties with foreign powers.

V.

Supervision of the bonded debt of the island.

It may be set down as an established historical fact then that the Platt Amendment was really what it purported to be—the work of O. H. Platt.[1] It was he who foresaw the imperative need of some declaration by Congress; it was he who at the very beginning of consultation suggested the general lines to be followed in the declaration; he had a chief share in fixing its

[1] At different stages of the consultations various members of the Committee submitted suggestions and tentative drafts. One suggestion by Senator Platt, which he called "Preliminary," and which was to be proposed by him as an amendment to the Army Appropriation bill, reads as follows:

Amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. Platt (Connecticut), to the bill H. R. 14017, making appropriation for the support of the army for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1902.

That the United States hereby declares its purpose to withdraw its military occupation of Cuba whenever a government shall have been established under a constitution which, being in other respects acceptable, shall contain provisions by which the following enumerated rights shall be secured to the United States, and such government shall have been recognized as an independent government by the President:

First, to maintain troops in said island for a period not exceeding ten years, for the purpose of assuring its complete and continued pacification, and the maintenance of its obligations, domestic and international.

Second, the right of the United States to maintain two coaling and naval stations in said island.

Third, provisions which limit the right of the Government of Cuba to incur bonded debt or obligations without the consent of the United States.

Fourth, provisions to the effect that treaties with foreign nations shall only be made by the Government of Cuba with the assent

lasting form; moreover, its smooth passage through the Senate was the result in no small degree of the general confidence in his integrity and statesmanship. It

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of the United States, and that simultaneously with the recognition of the independence of the Government of Cuba a convention providing for the commercial and other relations to subsist between said Government of Cuba and the Government of the United States, acceptable to the President of the United States, shall be entered into and executed.

Senator Chandler made a draft of an amendment to be proposed to the Naval Appropriation bill as follows:

That the naval and military forces of the United States shall be removed from the waters and harbors of the island of Cuba whenever, as a result of a fair and peaceful election, a national government shall be established under a republican constitution and certain rights of the United States shall be secured either under such Cuban constitution or by treaty with the United States, taking effect simultaneously with such constitution, namely:

I.

The right of the United States to intervene for ten years for the protection of Spaniards in Cuba in accordance with the treaty between the United States and Spain.

II.

The right to prevent the recognition or assumption by Cuba without the consent of the United States of any indebtedness (except to Cuban soldiers) growing out of transactions prior to the relinquishment of Spanish sovereignty over Cuba.

III.

The right to have and hold a coaling station at some suitable harbor.

IV.

The right to one hundred and fifty million dollars of bonds of the Cuban Government payable in forty years, and redeemable after twenty years, bearing interest at the rate of four per cent.

Senator Cullom proposed the following:

And the President is authorized to recognize the independence of the republic of Cuba, and withdraw the troops of the United

does not detract from the established fame of Secretary Root that this acknowledgment should be made.

States therefrom whenever it shall appear to his satisfaction that the inhabitants of that island have established and are prepared to maintain a stable government; and whenever such government shall by treaty recognize and acknowledge the right and authority of the United States to intervene by armed forces or otherwise for the preservation of peace and the protection of the property of citizens of the United States and foreigners in the island of Cuba; to preserve the financial credit of said government; to protect the commercial interests of the United States; and shall leave perpetually two safe and convenient harbors, one near the eastern and one near the western limits of said island, with sufficient land for repair and supply stations for the navy of the United States, such harbors to be selected under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy; and whenever the republic of Cuba shall by treaty agree to submit for the ratification of the Senate of the United States all treaties, protocols, and other agreements touching its relations with other governments than the United States.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE PORTO-RICAN TARIFF

Our "Plain Duty" toward Porto Rico—Organizes Opposition to Free Trade with the Island—A Successful Parliamentary Campaign—Letter to Lyman Abbott.

ON the conclusion of the war with Spain, with our assumption of strange territorial responsibilities, Senator Platt as a protectionist was up against a new problem. The first important question to be settled with reference to Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Philippines was how far it would be practicable for them to merge with us commercially, what obligations we owed them which could be satisfied without injustice to our own people. Mr. Platt had been a staunch advocate of expansion. There was never a time after the beginning of hostilities when he did not hold that Porto Rico and the Philippines must become possessions of the United States; but he was no less a friend to protection of American industries than to expansion of American territory, and he contended that our insular possessions, politically and commercially, should not be brought into too close a union with us.

Porto Rico presented the first question for settlement. The long period of suspense accompanying the change in political control had left the island in a bad way. She had lost the advantage which she formerly had in her two principal markets. Spanish and Cuban

ports, hitherto open, were now closed to her products except upon equal terms with the rest of the world, while she had not yet found her way into the markets of the United States. A hurricane which swept over the island in August, 1899, had left 100,000 people homeless. Many faced starvation. It was imperative that the United States establish civil authority there as quickly as possible and take immediate steps for the permanent relief of the distressed inhabitants.

At the beginning of the Fifty-sixth Congress in 1899, President McKinley, swayed by feelings of humanity and a praiseworthy desire to encourage cordial relations with the people of the island, incorporated in his annual message a paragraph recommending the establishment of a civil government and declaring it to be our "plain duty" to abolish all customs tariffs between the United States and Porto Rico and give the island's products free access to our markets. It was a taking proposal, for it contained two telling ingredients of popularity. It appealed to the generous impulses of a people still glowing with enthusiasm kindled in the war for the emancipation of Cuba and it accorded with the programme of those who, having opposed the acquisition of the Philippines, were now busily engaged in arguing that over territory once acquired the provisions of the Constitution extended of its own force. Thus it met with the immediate approval of the great majority of the press and of the people, and Congress was expected to acquiesce without undue delay. Chairman Payne of the Ways and Means Committee promptly presented in the House a bill to carry the recommendation into effect, and a measure was likewise introduced in the Senate. It seemed ungracious not to join in the advancement of so philanthropic a purpose and yet

there were a few who could not see their way to do it. Chief among these was Senator Platt. He perceived at once in the proposal a menace to the satisfactory adjustment of the relations between the United States and its extra-territorial possessions, and after careful consideration of everything at stake he made up his mind that he could not give his approval to the President's plan. For a time he kept his own counsel, but when he went home to Connecticut during the holiday recess, and thought it all over there among his own people, he could remain quiet no longer. On December 28th, he wrote from Meriden to Senator Foraker, who as Chairman of the Committee on Porto Rico and the Pacific Islands would have most to do with the projected legislation, a letter setting out the conclusions at which he had arrived:

I am much distressed by the recommendation in the report of the Secretary of War and also in the message of the President to the effect that acts should be passed admitting goods from Porto Rico into our ports free of duty. I cannot but think that the alleged reason for the necessity of doing so does not exist. The principal production of Porto Rico is coffee; the next in importance are tobacco and sugar—fruits are of but little importance. The ground upon which such legislation is recommended is that we have destroyed their market with Spain, and we ought to make good by giving them free markets here. As to coffee, it is free now. As to sugar, they have just as good a chance as the Cuban planter has, and so far as extending the sugar industry in Porto Rico, by giving them free trade, I am inclined to think that would amount to very little; for if I understand the character of their lands, sugar can only be raised to a limited extent, and on the low lands. As to tobacco and cigars, if they were made free there would be no particular demand for them in the United States either now or at

any future time, unless the taste for Porto Rico tobacco could be cultivated, so that I think the supposed prospective advantage to the island has been greatly exaggerated. The political effect of such action would I fear be very disastrous. I do not think I am unduly apprehensive. We have carried our elections upon the policy of protection, and we have held our voters to the Republican party because we made them think we were honestly in favor of protection and therefore the true friend of the American laborer. If we by act of Congress admit goods free from Porto Rico we shall not only affect the people engaged in the growing of beet sugar, the sugar industry, the tobacco growers and cigar manufacturers, but we shall be charged with the abandonment of our protective principle. That principle we have always asserted was that we proposed to protect our laborers against the competition of the cheap and ignorant laborer. The whole Chinese question turns on that. Now if we let goods from Porto Rico in free, we put our home laborers into competition with the cheapest of cheap labor. I already hear the mutterings of the coming storm. It will be useless to tell a mechanic or any other kind of laborer that he is not going to be hurt by free goods from Porto Rico; he will see that we have abandoned protection.

Anti-expansion has gained more strength from the laboring element just from the belief that free goods were to be admitted from our new possessions than from any other class of our citizens, and, such a statute once passed, the muttering storm as it sweeps onward will acquire velocity and force, and we shall have an issue in the next campaign harder to meet than the anti-expansion, the anti-trust, or the free-silver issue. We have been so long receiving free goods from our Territories that there is ground for the idea that we must do so under the Constitution. As to any of our newly acquired possessions, it is of the utmost importance that we settle now, by legislation in this Congress, our right to put duties upon goods coming

from any of our new possessions. Whether it be the same duties that we levy on goods from foreign countries, or whether they be preferential duties that we levy on goods coming from Porto Rico, the fact that we levy any duty will settle, and this is the only way that we can settle, the apprehension that we must eventually receive goods free of duty from Cuba and the Philippines. Hawaii does not need her goods to come into our ports free, for the treaty of reciprocity is to stand and pretty much everything which we use is free already. Besides I think it can well be enacted in the Hawaiian bill that except as to the goods which were made free by our reciprocity treaty, goods coming from Hawaiian ports should be subject to duty, either the same as other foreign countries or preferential duties. The trouble ahead of us, I can see, is more with the Philippines and with Cuba, when it comes to us as everyone expects it will finally come, than with Porto Rico and Hawaii; but it is the first step that counts and it is the establishment of a precedent that gives trouble. I cannot state too emphatically my apprehensions of the political consequences which will follow making goods from any of our new possessions free, and I feel as if I must call your attention to it.

But he did not set out rashly on a crusade against the recognized head of his party. He appreciated the importance of some understanding with the Executive before going so far in his dissenting course, and soon after his return to Washington he went to the White House fortified with arguments to show the President the dangers in the path upon which the feet of the administration were set. He found Mr. McKinley, as always, in a reasonable mood, and he came away from the interview satisfied that in opposing the admission of Porto-Rican products free of duty he would not run counter to the wishes of the administration, provided some consideration were shown the island in

the way of a discriminating tariff. Thus sustained he undertook to organize the Republican forces. It was a delicate task requiring tact as well as courage, together with complete mastery of the subject in hand; for it was no light thing to marshal his own party against the President's declared policy while maintaining personal and political relations unbroken. That Senator Platt succeeded in accomplishing his object, leaving at the end a satisfied and united party, was due to qualities not often found combined. The feeling with which he entered on his mission is revealed in a letter which he wrote early in the discussion:

I do not wish to be accused of being courageous, but it has required a great deal of courage to withstand what was apparently the purpose of the administration, of the President and Secretary Root, with reference to Porto Rico, but I think the sentiment here has changed and is coming around to the idea that we must not admit that any of our new possessions are a part of the United States in the sense that the Constitution extends itself over them, or that we must have free trade with them. I really think that that danger has passed now, though it was imminent. Exactly what the outcome will be no one can foresee. I think it almost suicidal from the standpoint of government and political policy to attempt to do anything just at present. We have not had time to think it out in detail and we are liable to get committed without knowing it. We ought to continue military government until after the next Presidential election. . . . The appeal of Secretary Root to the President that we have destroyed the trade of Porto Rico is not well grounded, and the recommendation that we shall give them free trade to rehabilitate them is entirely unnecessary. A preferential duty would do that as fully as it ought to be done. Free trade with Porto Rico would make some sugar planters millionaires

but would not help the people any more than a reasonable reduction of tariff duties would. Free trade in cigars would transfer the cigar-making industry from the United States to Cuba. The American Tobacco Company has already begun to purchase manufactories and plantations in anticipation of it. We cannot give free trade to Porto Rico without getting into trouble in Cuba at once. They will demand it as a condition of forming a government there which shall be satisfactory to us and making a treaty which will protect our interests there in the future. I do not think that the evils of free trade with Porto Rico are at all appreciated yet. . . . This whole matter is serious. The danger is mitigated. But there is still danger ahead.

He embodied his own plan in an amendment which, on January 24, 1900, he proposed to the Senate bill providing a government for the island of Porto Rico. The amendment fixed a duty upon imports from Porto Rico equivalent to eighty per cent. of the duties levied upon like articles imported into the United States from foreign countries, and specified that the moneys thus collected should be held in the United States Treasury as a separate fund to be used for the government and benefit of the island. He also proposed to strike out the provision for the election of a delegate to the House of Representatives. At the same time in pursuance of a consistent policy he offered an amendment to the Hawaiian bill doing away with the proposed delegate and providing "that until further legislation by Congress the existing customs regulations of the Hawaiian Islands with the United States shall remain unchanged."

The fight was kept up all winter, and the country was set by the ears. The Republicans in Congress who blocked our pathway to "plain duty" were denounced unmercifully by the press which was substantially a

unit for free trade with Porto Rico, not appreciating the readiness of the President to accept a modification of the legislation he had urged. Public meetings were held and resolutions were adopted calling upon the insurgent Congressmen to abandon their policy of obstruction. Finally after much discussion and many canvasses and conferences a bill was agreed to permitting the entry of imports from Porto Rico on payment of fifteen per cent. of the duties levied upon imports from foreign countries, the moneys collected to be retained in the Treasury for the use of Porto Rico. The President signed the bill on April 12th. A bill had already become law placing at the disposal of the President for the benefit of Porto Rico over $2,000,000 which had been collected as duty on Porto-Rican imports since the evacuation by Spain. When the differences were nearing a settlement, Senator Platt with members of his Committee was obliged to visit Cuba on a tour of investigation. On his return he found awaiting him a letter from Dr. Lyman Abbott, editor of the *Outlook* which had been opposed to any tariff between Porto Rico and the United States, asking him to defend his position in the columns of the *Outlook:*

I can understand that some reason for such a tariff temporarily imposed may be found in the immediate financial exigencies of the island. I cannot understand the reasons which lead any one to desire to impose a tariff on Porto-Rican products for the benefit of our home industries. I am very desirous that those reasons should be stated in our columns by some one in whose integrity, uprightness, and statesmanship the country has confidence, because I only wish to get at the truth in this matter and to put the truth and the whole truth before our readers.

To Dr. Abbott's request Mr. Platt responded in a

letter which, while not intended for publication at the time, was the most comprehensive statement of his contention which he ever made:

I do not think it is advisable that I should write an article for the *Outlook* which you suggest. I am of course a protectionist. I am one because I believe in the system of protection as absolutely necessary to the development of our industries and our prosperity. There is no more hateful word in the English language to me than that of "free trade." There is nothing which to my mind could be so disastrous to our country as the abandonment of the doctrine of protection. We have never prospered without it; we have always suffered with free trade and revenue tariff. I am not an advocate of protection because it benefits a particular industry. I advocate it because I believe without it we cannot maintain the welfare and happiness of the people who labor in the United States. In other words, that the single doctrine and idea of protection is that the laboring people of the United States who have become accustomed to receive what I may call American wages and thereby to advance in education, social affairs, prosperity, and happiness should not be brought into competition with cheap and unintelligent labor of other countries, and I do not believe in putting the laborers of the United States who receive anywhere from one to five dollars a day into competition with the laborers of Porto Rico and the Philippines who receive only from nine to thirty cents per day. It is not wise, and it is not necessary, and, in the end it would hurt the laborers of the United States more than it would benefit the laborers of Porto Rico and the Philippines. I do not stop to inquire in what industries the competition will exist. I know it will exist in some; I believe it will exist in many, and that is enough for me. We can establish free trade in the United States as against the foreign countries—that is to say, a revenue tariff only, which is free trade, as distinguished from protection, if we can

reduce the price of labor in the United States. Otherwise we can not. I think it is not too much to say that every industry in the United States can compete with industries in foreign countries by reducing labor to the basis of labor in foreign countries. I think it would be sinful to do it, however. But you will say that Porto Rico is not a foreign country, and that the Philippines are not a foreign country, and we hear a great deal about the Constitution following the flag and the right of all persons in territory which we may acquire, to be treated precisely as we treat all citizens of our own States. I deny it constitutionally, legally, and morally. When territory comes into our possession and under our jurisdiction, our constitutional, legal, and moral obligation is to do whatever is best for the people of such possessions, having our own interests as well as their own at heart, and that only.

Underlying all this contention about Porto Rico is first: the anti-expansion, and anti-imperialist contention; and second: the contention of free trade, as against protection. The anti-imperialist wants to make it appear that it was a bad thing to take, and is a bad thing to hold, Porto Rico and the Philippines, because doing so we are under a constitutional and moral obligation to treat the people whom we find there just as we treat our own citizens without reference to their condition, capacity, or needs. In other words, that we must legislate for such possessions with regard to their ultimate admission as states, and have neither the power nor right to treat them otherwise. They know perfectly well that if they can make the laboring people of the United States believe that we must have free trade with them they will overthrow the administration and in some way compel the surrender of the territory, which we have already acquired, either to the people thereunder or to some other nation. It is for this reason that they roll President McKinley's words about "plain duty" and "free trade" as sweet morsels under their tongue. The free-trader also, who is always on the lookout to

break down the protective system in the United States, feels that he has his innings now and that he has an opportunity to distract and possibly defeat the Republican party and thereby shake the policy of protection to American industries and American labor.

For myself, as I have said, I do not think it was ever necessary or wise to suggest the idea of absolute free trade with Porto Rico. The Secretary of War, when he recommended it, took occasion to say that he did not consider that we were under any constitutional or legal obligation to do it, but that the war with Spain having taken away the trade of Porto Rico and the hurricane having destroyed their industries, we ought to do it for the purpose of rehabilitating the island.

It was scarcely true that the war had taken away their trade with Spain, but if true, free trade could not help them as to their principal product, coffee, for that was always free. For sugar, their next great product, ours has always been their particular market, and Spain one of their smaller markets. Tobacco has never been exported to Spain but has been exported to Cuba largely. It would have continued to be exported to Cuba, had not Mr. Porter, who arranged the new Cuban tariff, put a prohibitive duty of five dollars a pound on tobacco sent to Cuba, so that it was scarcely true that the war with Spain had taken away the trade of the islands. Nor was it true that absolute free trade was required for its recuperation. Any reduction of tariff duties which gave a fair advantage over the producers of other countries would have accomplished the work as certainly as absolute free trade. Reckoning the population of Porto Rico at a million, there are according to reports, 800,000 who never wear a shoe, and 50,000 more who only wear them occasionally. I do not speak of this to disparage the people, but merely to indicate that the masses are not to be greatly benefited by free trade. The planters who raise the sugar and the tobacco will have a gold mine opened for them as it were, and a free present of

that mine made by the United States, and that is all there is of it. The twenty-five per cent. reduction of tariff rates, compared with the rates from other countries and to other countries would have been just as effective to stimulate the industries and help the people of Porto Rico as absolute free trade. But I cannot say these things very well in a newspaper article or, indeed, in a speech.

The President has, I think, in the generosity born of a great soul, made an unfortunate recommendation which was seized upon by his enemies, by the anti-expansionists and anti-imperialists, and by free-traders to advance their purposes, and to elect Mr. Bryan President; but I do not feel that I should add anything to their weapons by saying that I thought the original recommendation of the President was unfortunate. The use made of it by his enemies made it necessary to assert the principle in legislation that we were not bound to treat the people of Porto Rico and the Philippines as citizens of the United States, or to concede their right to ultimate statehood. The fifteen per cent. of duty provided for in the Porto-Rican bill asserts that principle, and for that reason and because the bill proceeds upon the idea that we are not bound to make a state of Porto Rico it secures my support.

CHAPTER XXVIII

RECIPROCITY WITH CUBA

Bulwark of the Administration—Leader of Long Struggle in Congress—Opposition at Home—Ratification of Treaty.

A CRUCIAL test of Senator Platt's patriotism and courage came with the acceptance of the Platt Amendment and the resulting obligations which fell upon the United States. Even while Cuba was under our military control he had taken the question of its future commercial relations with the United States into serious consideration, and had come to the conclusion that in due season the island must be, at least nominally, independent, with a reciprocal trade arrangement with the United States, which would enable it to survive commercially and thus prevent its falling perforce into the absolute possession of the United States with the resulting perils of annexation and statehood.

As early as January, 1901, Leonard Wood, governor-general of Cuba, had taken up the question of special trade arrangements and had written letters to several Senators urging action along that line. He asked the War Department for a fifty per cent. reduction in the export duty on Cuban tobacco and he also asked Congress that consideration be given Cuban sugar and tobacco imported into the United States as in the case of Porto Rico. "Of course we cannot expect equal consideration," he pleaded, "but for Heaven's sake give

us something, if only twenty-five per cent. It will do more than all else to clear the political situation and bring openly and strongly to our support, the classes of people always friendly to us, the commercial, the planters, and agriculturists." He reported that the country was profoundly tranquil, that a friendly feeling for the United States prevailed among all the better classes, and the producers, but that the agitating group were desperate and hungry. "They want to get the government in their hands, settle their claims, and after that the devil can take the hindmost." The restrictive conditions of the Foraker Amendment, the heavy export duty on tobacco, and the ruinous duty upon tobacco and sugar imported into the United States made it no easy task to instil enthusiasm into the people over the blessings of American control, and in the judgment of General Wood it was of vital importance to come to their relief. The Secretary of War approved the recommendation for a fifty per cent. reduction in the export duty on tobacco, but beyond that it was impossible for the executive branch of the Government to go. Neither could the legislative branch undertake any measure of relief while Cuba remained under our military control, and Senator Platt thought he saw in this circumstance an argument which might be used to induce the Cuban Constitutional Convention, then in wrangling session, to determine before adjournment what the future relations between Cuba and the United States were to be. He wrote both to General Wood and to Secretary Root along this line. To General Wood he explained that he did not see how it was possible to reduce duties on Cuban sugar and tobacco until Cuba became an independent country and could make treaties:

We cannot reduce the duties on products coming from one country without reducing them equally when coming from other countries with whom we have treaties containing the favored nation clause. When Cuba's independence is recognized by the United States, we can then make a reciprocity treaty with her, reducing our duties on her products in consideration of reductions on goods which are imported there, and I should think that if Cubans understood this it would be a great inducement to them to determine the relations which shall exist between Cuba and the United States after her government is set up. It seems to me that this is the strongest argument which you have to persuade Cuba before the adjournment of her Constitutional Convention to determine what the relations are to be between the two countries.

The Platt Amendment was adopted by Congress a few weeks later and the Cuban Convention spent many weeks bandying words as to how it should be embodied in the new constitution or whether it should be embodied there at all. Late in April a delegation of members of the Convention came to Washington to confer with the Secretary of War. They asked for a promise that, if the provisions of the Platt Amendment were accepted, the United States would enter into reciprocal commercial relations with Cuba. Of course such a pledge involving the action of Congress could not be given, but in so far as it was able the administration gave assurances which were satisfactory to the delegates. Concerning this period Mr. Platt wrote over a year later in an article published in the *North American Review*, at a time when Congress had shown exasperating reluctance to take up the question of trade relations with Cuba:

During all the period of our military occupation, leading

up to Cuban independence, it was understood that the economic relations between Cuba and the United States were as important as their political relations. When the United States required of Cuba that her constitution should contain guarantees which should forever place her in a position of intimate relations to us, it was universally understood that we on our part would aid her by providing such reciprocal commercial advantages as would enable her to be self-reliant and self-supporting. The Monroe Doctrine, which we had declared three quarters of a century ago and insisted upon as our right, was wrought into a compact between the two countries, so that thenceforth, as to Cuba, it was no longer to rest upon assertion alone but upon constitutional agreement. While we did not ask of Cuba in form that she should not enter into commercial arrangements with other countries to our disadvantage, the natural currents of trade made it a practical impossibility for her to do so, and a commission sent to us from her Constitutional Convention returned home with the just expectation that a compliance with our desires as to her constitutional guarantees would be followed by the establishment of mutual trade relations which would prove to be of great economic advantage to her. The Constitutional Convention of Cuba asked, as a return for their acceptance of the provisions which we had requested, that there should be some promise given by the United States of the establishment of advantageous relations with us. In the nature of things such a promise was impossible, but the Convention was asked to act in the premises and to trust the United States. It did incorporate into its constitution provisions which we thought essential for us, and it did trust us to provide by legislation, or treaty, commercial advantages which she could not obtain from other countries. So, up to the opening of our last Congress all was well. The Cuban constitution was adopted. Complete independence awaited only the necessary successive steps for its establishment. Its merchants, its planters, and labor-

ers waited in trustful confidence that the United States, through its Congress, would provide for the industrial as it had already provided for the political independence of Cuba. Not only was this anticipated in Cuba, but here as well. No one could have foreseen that the United States would deliberately refuse to discharge its obligation. The United States had never been a faith-breaker; its worst enemy could not have predicted that it would become one.

His own feeling about the provisions of a reciprocal agreement is shown in a letter which he wrote on June 11, 1901, to an American sugar-planter in Cuba who had been urging early action:

Cuba wants advantages by way of a reciprocity treaty upon its productions, the principal of which are now sugar, tobacco, and fruit. I do not believe that there would be any serious objection to a reduction of the duties on Cuban sugar and tobacco; I think there would be a pretty vigorous opposition in the matter of fruits. It would not be to the advantage of Cuba to have free trade in sugar and tobacco, because free trade with Cuba in these products would, I think, practically result in free trade with other countries. If it can get a fair reduction of duty on sugar and tobacco, it will put the island in a good condition, and this I think can be done if Cuba gives advantages to our products. In other words, that a fair reciprocity treaty can be negotiated and ratified in the Senate.

Up to the time of meeting of the Fifty-seventh Congress in December, 1901, there was no other thought in the public mind than that action would be taken speedily for the relief of Cuba. It was known to be President McKinley's wish, and upon his death President Roosevelt accepted as a matter of course the responsibility of carrying the policy into effect. In his first annual message Mr. Roosevelt recommended such

"substantial tariff reductions" as were necessary to insure industrial prosperity, and in due order a suitable bill for this purpose was introduced in the House and referred to the Ways and Means Committee which began a series of hearings. Then suddenly there arose a cloud in the sky. The beet-sugar and tobacco interests had been quietly at work through the summer and fall, and the American Protective Tariff League had busied itself in stirring up opposition in Congress. A group of insurgent Republicans in the House, who took upon themselves the then timely appellation of "Boxers," banded themselves together with the avowed purpose of defeating reciprocity legislation. Mr. Platt has told the rest of the story in the article from which a quotation has already been made:

We had begun in several States to produce sugar from beets, and for many years we had been producing in one or two States sugar from cane. All at once and without reason, the cry was raised that any reduction of the duty on sugar coming from Cuba would injure, strike down, and destroy the beet- and cane-sugar industry of the United States. Members and Senators from States in which these industries were established became first timid, then needlessly frightened, lest their assent to legislation favoring reciprocal trade relations with Cuba would lose them their seats. Most of these Senators and Representatives were Republicans. They were few in number compared to the whole body of Republicans, but they were numerous enough, by joining with the Democrats who were ready for any action which should divide Republican forces, to prevent wise and necessary legislation; and so the contest began.

As time went on, facts were ignored, fears were magnified, prejudice invoked, until reason and cool judgment seemed to have entirely departed. Two assertions, neither of which could be sustained by proof, formed the control-

ling basis of action by the few Republicans who have been spoken of. First, the assertion that to reduce the tariff on Cuban sugar by twenty-five or even twenty per cent. would take away the protection enjoyed by the beet- and cane-sugar producers in the United States—an assertion which is absolutely groundless, as is shown by the fact that we take into our country, free of duty, 500,000 tons of sugar from Hawaii and Porto Rico, while maintaining the duty against all other countries, without in any way interfering with the protection of our own sugar producers. Second, the assertion that the so-called sugar trust would derive all the benefit resulting from any reduction of the duty on Cuban sugar—an assertion which is equally groundless, as is shown by the fact that Hawaiian sugar and Porto-Rican sugar, though duty free, have brought the same price in American markets as sugars from Cuba or Germany. The prejudice against the sugar trust was continually, and most successfully, appealed to. It was so apparent that any reduction of the duty upon Cuban sugar proposed would not reduce the price of home produced sugar, that it is not probable that this argument alone could have resulted in defeating the suggested legislation, and so the plea that the trust, rather than the Cuban planter, was to be benefited was the objection most relied upon. It is a curious fact that while there is a popular belief that combinations and trusts control legislation in Congress, it is nevertheless true that the most effective means of preventing legislation is to assert that a combination or trust desires it. Even staid legislators lose their heads when the statement is made that a trust is favoring a measure. The sugar trust is perhaps the most unpopular of all capitalistic combinations in the United States, and the apprehension excited by continual reiteration that the legislation in question was being supported and would inure to the benefit of the sugar trust was most potent. In the opinion of the writer it was utterly fallacious. That it was successful in defeating for the time being the

performance of our plain duty with regard to Cuba, must be admitted. Nowhere in the United States is public sentiment so liable to be misunderstood as in the city of Washington while Congress is in session, and the fear that the beet-sugar industry might possibly be injured, and that the sugar trust might possibly reap some benefit as a result of the proposed legislation, was so skilfully manipulated, so cunningly fostered, and so persistently and vigorously reiterated, that the main question was practically obscured. Many members took counsel of their fears rather than of their judgment; fear developed into frenzy; suspicion usurped the province of fact; prejudice was more potent than reason; the well-considered policy of two administrations and an overwhelming sentiment of moral obligation were ignored. Pledges were sought and obtained, until it became apparent that no legislation looking to the relief of Cuba and the extension of our own trade was possible, except such as might be dictated by the opposition for party advantage without reference to the interests of Cuba or ourselves.

The President in a special message tried unsuccessfully, to bring Congress back to the real question involved, of our national obligation to Cuba, and Congress adjourned in the early summer of 1902 with nothing done.

The bill which passed the House after a memorable struggle was dictated by the opposition, and as the unfriendly sentiment in the Senate was strong and eager enough to prevent favorable action, it was useless to bring the bill out of committee. Mr. Platt had no opportunity to deal directly with the question, but early in the struggle he seized an opportunity to issue a short statement to the press which left no doubt about where he stood:

I am a protectionist and have been so much so that I have been called a partisan. I am as strong a protectionist now as I ever was, but believe proper and reasonable concessions can be made to Cuban products in return for proper and reasonable tariff concessions to certain of our products, which would greatly benefit the trade of both countries, and not appreciably injure any American industry.

I think the cause of protection is being wounded now in the house of its professed friends, and that the free-trader cannot injure the cause of protection as much as protectionists who insist upon unreasonable and unnecessary customs duties.

Towards the end of the session, replying to an attack on reciprocity which had been injected into a general debate by Senator Teller, he took advantage of another opportunity to declare himself in an emphatic way. Seventy-five per cent. of the people of the United States he declared were going to be "disappointed and chagrined and humiliated" because Congress was going to adjourn without taking action upon the question:

That humiliation, that disappointment, and that chagrin will not down, Mr. President. The people of the United States see through all these things and are not going to be diverted in their sense of what we, in justice and self-interest, owe to Cuba and ourselves in this matter, by anything which may be alluded to for the purpose of obscuring the real issue in this matter. That sentiment will grow, as it ought to grow.

I desire to say here that from the day Cuba came into our military occupation I have seen or thought I saw that there could be but one ending to this matter—either that we must come into such economic relations with Cuba as would give that republic created by us—in a measure

shut off from profitable communication with the rest of the world—such fair prosperity as would produce contentment and happiness and affection for the United States, or, on the other hand, such a condition in Cuba as would eventually compel us to accept at the hands of the disappointed people of Cuba an offer for annexation to the United States.

I regard that, Mr. President, as the greatest peril which to-day besets our Government. I can think of no future danger to be so much apprehended as that. When we begin to annex to our country foreign territories with foreign inhabitants, inhabitants alien to our race, to our habits, to our customs, to our traditions, and to our institutions, with the near certainty that statehood is to follow, we shall have taken the first step, in my judgment, toward the demoralization, if not the disintegration, of our republican institutions.

I think we have come to a crisis in our affairs. I think we have one plain duty, and that is so to treat Cuba, with reference to her commercial relations to the United States, as that we may make and keep her our friend. I stand for a permanent republic in Cuba. If the amendment, which I had the honor to present to the Army bill at the last session, meant anything, it meant that Cuba was not only to have its independence, but that the United States stood and would stand ready at hand to see that that independent and republican government was permanent in the island of Cuba.

I believe that the best interests of that people and the best interests of the United States, the best interests of that Government and of our Government should lead us to such close reciprocal, commercial, and political relations as that we shall always be friends and shall not be called upon to absorb Cuba.

President Roosevelt would not have been true to his known character if he had permitted the affair to end

here. Congress having ignored his urgent message, he nevertheless kept up the fight. On May 20, 1902, the United States forces had been withdrawn from Cuba, in accordance with the terms of the Platt Amendment, and the administration proceeded to negotiate with the Government of the new republic a reciprocity treaty to carry our implied promises into effect. It is a curious commentary on the inexperience of the people with whom our State Department had to deal that after we had sent our draft of the treaty to Havana we were compelled also to send one of our own American officers, General Tasker H. Bliss, who had been in charge of the Cuban customs, to teach them what to do with it, how to propose objections and counter-proposals and put their case before our Government in a practical way. Otherwise the treaty might never have passed beyond its initial stages. It was signed at last at Havana on December 11th, and duly transmitted to the Senate. In the meantime President Roosevelt, in numerous speeches during a tour through many States, had appealed to the American people, on every consideration of a generous and far-sighted public policy, to prove to Cuba that our friendship with her was of a continuing character and that we intended to aid her in her struggle for material prosperity. The President in his annual message called attention to the treaty which he was about to send to the Senate. He urged the adoption of reciprocity:

> Not only because it is eminently for our own interests to control the Cuban market and by every means to foster our supremacy in the tropical lands and waters south of us, but also because we, of the giant republic of the north, should make all our sister nations of the American continent

feel that whenever they will permit it we desire to show ourselves disinterestedly and effectively their friend.

Even with this urging, the treaty hung on all winter. Finally in the special session of March, 1903, the Senate ratified it with an amendment declaring the approval of the convention by Congress to be necessary before it should take effect. This meant a further vexatious delay, but public sentiment at last had become aroused. The situation in Cuba during the summer became more and more pressing and President Roosevelt, encouraged to action by Senator Platt and other friends of the new republic, called Congress to meet in extra session on November 9, 1903, to enact the legislation necessary to put the treaty into effect, prior to the time for moving the sugar crop in December.

Mr. Platt was besieged on every hand. The tobacco interests of Connecticut were bitterly opposed to the suggested arrangement, and there were ominous hints as to the possibility of his re-election. But he stood by his guns. When assailed with letters and telegrams protesting against his course, he hit back unflinchingly. A cigar-makers' union of New Haven sent him a set of resolutions demanding that he oppose the Cuban legislation; he replied:

I would be glad to comply with your request except for two reasons:

First—I have studied this question pretty carefully and am convinced that the cigar-makers and manufacturers of cigars will not be appreciably harmed by the passage of legislation to put the Cuban reciprocity treaty into effect, and

Second—That it will be for the interest of the whole country to have such legislation passed.

While I would like to meet the wishes of my constituents,

I feel that I must exercise my independent judgment in this matter.

The editor of a New Haven newspaper who for many years had been his friend in season and out appealed to him in behalf of the sugar and tobacco interests. He wrote back:

The reduction on Cuban imports will not hurt the sugar or tobacco industry one particle. Neither the sugar trust nor the tobacco trust will derive the slightest benefit from it. The talk about it has been the greatest exhibition of expansive bosh that I have ever known. It will not reduce the price of sugar in our market one eighth of a cent, so long as we maintain the duty on sugar, and if that should come off of course this reduction would not affect it. There will be no additional importation of cigars from Cuba by reason of the reduction—there might be a forty per cent. reduction and there would not. I believe that we do not gain a great deal from the trade of Cuba by it—in that respect I think it is one-sided; but if we could afford to spend three hundred million dollars to establish the independence of Cuba, I think we can afford to forego a few million dollars annually to make it more certain that that independence will be maintained.

The acting president of the American Protective Tariff League sent a circular letter to all Republican Senators urging them to stand against the legislation urged by the President. Mr. Platt responded:

I believe you and the American Protective Tariff League, if you represent it, are all wrong about this Cuban reciprocity business, and that you are doing the cause of protection an injury which its enemies can not do it. In this I am certain that I speak the sentiment of the best friends of protection—not only here but throughout the country. I

think you are decidedly mistaken and are therefore misrepresenting the sentiment of protectionists.

Excuse me for speaking thus plainly, but I am sure that I am telling you of a condition which you ought to appreciate.

Real public sentiment at last was effective. Congress, faced once more with the proposition, uncomplicated with any other question, was ready to act. The Reciprocity bill passed the House on November 19th, by a vote of 335 to 21. It was adopted by the Senate in the regular session a month later by a vote of 57 to 18. From a perusal of the proceedings of the Senate it might not appear that Senator Platt had taken an especially active part in securing this legislation; yet he had been the strongest bulwark of the administration in Congress from the beginning, and the weight which attached to his support of reciprocity was all the greater because of his record as an advocate of high protection. His advice and counsel moreover had been of the utmost value to the administration in its dealings with Cuba on account of his prestige as the author of the Platt Amendment. He regarded the victory as one of the most gratifying incidents of his whole career. During all the months of discussion no more impressive words were written than those which were embodied in his noble appeal to the righteous impulse of the American people:

The doings of nations are like the acts of individuals; motive and action make character both in men and in nations. It is the man of pure motive, of brave deeds and steady purpose who builds for himself a noble character. If the motive, the deed, and the purpose are but feeble and soon abandoned, the resultant character is ignoble. So with us as a people. Though our purpose was lofty, though

our triumph was striking, if we fail now in accomplishment we shall be either pitied or despised. Nations, like men, incur honorable obligations. If fulfilled to the letter, true growth is the result; if ignored, by men or nations, the just contempt of mankind is incurred. Our obligation did not cease when Spain was driven from Cuba, or when years of careful and unselfish administration resulted in the establishment of the Cuban republic. When we undertook to put an end to bad government in Cuba, we became responsible for the establishment, and the maintenance as well, of a good government there. The world will properly hold us bound in all honor so to treat the republic which we ourselves have set up that it shall be both prosperous and stable. The United States, if true to its history and its character, must train up its child in the way it should go, so that when old it will not depart from it.

CHAPTER XXIX

AGAINST TARIFF REVISION

Opposed to Tariff Tinkering in 1905—Letter to President Roosevelt—Saves Dingley Law.

THAT the episode of Cuban reciprocity did not carry with it a modification of Senator Platt's attitude toward the policy of protection soon became clear. The position which he maintained throughout his life was that indicated in a letter which he had written about the time of the passage of the Dingley act, in which he said:

> I do not recognize the distinction between high protection and moderate protection. Protection to my mind means such duties on foreign products as shall fairly equalize the difference in the cost of production.

For some reason which has never been satisfactorily explained along the lines of political logic, the election of 1904 was followed by a demand in influential Republican circles for a revision of the Dingley Tariff law which had then been in operation eight years, and the life of which had been coincident with the period of greatest prosperity in the history of the United States. There had been no party pledges that a revision would be made—indeed, the tariff question had hardly figured in the campaign one way or the other, the occasional allusions to it being by way of endorsement of the Dingley law, with startling comparisons between

the business distress of the Cleveland administration and the financial rejoicing of the succeeding years. But no sooner was the election over, with its unprecedented Republican majority, than there arose a cry for a special session of Congress to be called immediately after March 4th, to take up the tariff question and remedy the defects of the Dingley law. It is true that nobody could point out just where those defects were, or what particular schedule of the tariff needed revision, but the feeling undoubtedly prevailed, and many people had been convinced by a certain element of the press, that something, vaguely, must be done.

President Roosevelt, continued in the White House by an unexampled expression of the popular will, was impressed by the newspaper discussion and was influenced also by certain members of his Cabinet who were inclined to revision. He was disposed to take up the question in his annual message, and was prepared to issue a call for a special session of Congress after the fourth of March, but before acting he sought the advice of some of the "elder statesmen." Senator Platt was invited to the White House. He went there with a friend, and the President told him what he had in mind. He listened patiently till the President had concluded and then, leaving his chair and pacing the floor, he gave the reasons why in his judgment the tariff should not be disturbed at that time. As to the impression made upon the mind of the Executive, we have only the inferences to be drawn from a letter which, on his return to Connecticut, Mr. Platt wrote to an associate on the Finance Committee:

I saw the President when I was in Washington, and he is going to simply say in his message that he will call the

attention of Congress to the tariff question later. His mind, I judge, is pretty fully made up to the policy of having a joint commission, to be composed of members of the Committee on Ways and Means and Finance Committee, appointed to consider the subject, with a view to reporting to an extra session to be called perhaps in September. I did not talk with him very much on the subject. What I did say was that I could not see any necessity for an extra session, and that it seemed to me that the tariff is well enough as it is. . . . He admitted that he did not think there was any necessity for it except a political necessity, and that he believed that this sentiment is much stronger than I suppose it is; that if we do not meet it, it will grow stronger and stronger until finally it will get the upper hand. That is about what I came away on. . . . You know as well as I, that a joint commission composed as suggested, would be entirely valueless, so far as getting our ideas accepted is concerned, if they differed from the ideas of the members of the Ways and Means Committee. We would be placed in a very humiliating position, and it is far better, in my judgment, to let the Ways and Means Committee formulate its own bill, whatever it may be, and then let us consider it when it comes over to us, as we have always considered such questions. I do not believe Payne or the members of the Ways and Means Committee of the House would consent to anything else, but I do not know. If they did, I know it would mean that we should sit and struggle all through the summer months, with no agreement except such as might be reached by our falling in with their wishes, and when it came over to the Senate, if objected to, as it would surely be by a large number of our colleagues, we would simply be charged with having sacrificed their interests. I do not think it will work.

He did not content himself with an oral argument to persuade the Executive of the inadvisability of

reopening the tariff question. It was a subject upon which he held profound convictions, and immediately upon his arrival home he prepared a letter to the President reinforcing what he had already said. The force and lucidity of his statement do not suffer from the lapse of time, or in consideration of events four years later, when Congress was called together to do that which Roosevelt's better second thought condemned:

WASHINGTON, CONNECTICUT, November 21, 1904.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

Since seeing you on Friday, I have been thinking about this matter of tariff re-adjustment and I want to put the result of my thought on paper.

First,—I am firmly of the opinion that a general tariff revision is unnecessary and would prove disastrous to the business interests of the country. No Republican that I know of has advocated a general revision. It could not be undertaken and consummated without throwing the whole business and financial relations of the country into a state of uncertainty, and if it were understood that such a thing were contemplated, the uncertainty would begin from the present moment, continue all through the consideration of the subject, and long after its final conclusion. To attempt to make a new Tariff bill throughout, would, in my judgment, be a piece of egregious folly.

Second,—I do not admit from the standpoint of the business interests of the country and its prosperity, the necessity for making any changes or amendments in rates. The tariff is well enough as it is; it is largely to be credited with our wonderful prosperity and present impregnable business position, but if it be true that there is a sentiment for changes in tariff rates which must be placated, then, I insist that such changes should be few and moderate. I do not agree that there is any general sentiment such as I have named. There is a free-trade sentiment, stimulated

by Democratic leaders and newspapers, and there have always been protectionists who, as soon as a protective tariff has redeemed the country and put it in a prosperous condition, have, for some reason, been ready to fall in with the idea that duties ought to be reduced. I think the extent of this sentiment among Republicans has been and is, vastly overestimated. Personally, I would sooner undertake to show why the tariff should be let alone, than to fall into the spirit which favors any change. But, if we must take it up, what shall be done, and how shall it be done?

Third,—I think that any changes or amendments which it may be supposed we must, for political reasons, make, can be better made in the natural and ordinary way than by the appointment of any commission, or the calling of any extra session. By the natural and ordinary way, I mean that the Committee on Ways and Means should propose by way of amendment to the existing law, the changes which it is supposed we must, for political reasons, make. If the members of that Committee desired informal consultations with members of the Finance Committee of the Senate, there would be no difficulty in having them. Once made, these changes could be passed through the House at the short or a regular long session without exhaustive debate, and could be considered in the Senate, and if agreed to, passed there without lengthy interference with the regular business of the session—then the whole matter would be over. I think perhaps there is a general consensus of opinion that the duties on the coarser forms of iron and steel might be reduced without harm, but the moment you step outside of that, the different sections of the country will come into direct conflict. This picayune matter of free hides would be a storm centre in which the East and West, or rather Boston and the West, would be fighting a bitter battle—so with lumber, so with wood pulp, so with every other article with which I have heard changes suggested—still, if the battle must be fought, it, in my opinion, can be

fought in the regular way I have suggested, with less of regret when it is over, than by any commission or extra session method.

Fourth,—A commission composed of members of the House and Senate Committees to sit through the summer, would practically be obliged to hear and consider every proposed or contemplated change in the tariff, and that would involve the whole. I believe that a joint commission, such as is suggested, would simply develop and emphasize the antagonism which is supposed to exist between the two Houses. The House claims, and it has the right, to originate such measures. It seeks every opportunity to declare the fact that it does not propose to be dictated to or advised by the Senate in any matter which is thus within its own exclusive jurisdiction, and if such a commission met, the House members would inevitably assume the right to determine what should be done, and from the first the Senate members of that commission would either be placed in a position of acquiescence simply, or charged with interference in a matter in which, primarily, they had no right to be heard. Mr. Aldrich and Mr. Payne, the chairmen, can sit down and talk about such matters in their own rooms at the hotel without developing antagonism, but the moment such a commission undertook to deal with any particular item of the tariff, and the House members proposed certain action which the Senate members might say they thought inadvisable, the old antagonism, which you understand, I think, would be developed. But, admit, if you please, that they would work together in harmony and peace, which I do not believe, then, as I have said, every application for any change in any item of the tariff, and that would embrace the whole list, made to the commission, would have to be considered, or it would have to decide at once that it would only deal with a few of the items of the different schedules. It would be exceedingly difficult to mark out the line of limitation. Little by little, the list to be considered would be enlarged, until

finally, it would come to the consideration of an entire change of the Tariff law—a new bill, which would be named after the Chairman of the House Committee, and called the "Payne bill." I do not believe that you know exactly what that would mean, as one who has been through it several times does, but we all agree that it would mean a general upset of the business of the country.

Fifth,—As I have said, an extra session seems to me allowable only upon the theory that such changes as are necessary to be made (for political effect merely—mind you) cannot be made at a regular session or in the regular way. If the idea of a joint commission should prevail, and the result of the work of that commission should, as I believe it surely would, be a recommendation for a new Tariff bill, then I can see that an extra session might be desirable in order to get it out of the way as quickly as possible, but this above all things else, I deprecate. Indeed, the only argument in favor of an extra session is, that there is going to be such a vital change in the Tariff law that we must have time to get over the consequences of it before the next election. In other words, the calling of an extra session presupposes that there will be an entire revision of the tariff. It seems to me that what changes are to be made, and as I have already said, they should be few and moderate, should be proposed in the regular way that I have suggested, and disposed of in the regular way. We do not want any spectacular readjustment of the tariff. We cannot afford to have twelve months of uncertain, dull times, with laborers out of employment, and discontent generated. I think it would be better to take the stand at once that the present Tariff law in most of its features is wise and satisfactory; that the Committee on Ways and Means of the House will carefully consider in what respects it needs amendment and will present its conclusions to the House in the form of bills to effect that purpose, to be considered either at this present session, if they can be formulated in time (and if work is begun

immediately I think they can be) or at the December session. It grows on me more and more that it would be disastrous to throw this entire country into the vortex of agitation over a general revision of the Tariff law. This is the way it looks to me.

Very truly yours,
O. H. Platt.

With his friends in Connecticut he also corresponded along similar lines. One of them wrote him sapiently: "There should be a careful study of our tariff law, and such revision as changed conditions warrant should be promptly made." To this suggestion he replied:

Do you really appreciate what is meant by a *revision* of the tariff? What do you think ought to be changed in the tariff? I think it is a pretty good tariff as it is and that this talk about tariff revision is rather sentimental than otherwise. . . . I confess that I do not know in what respect the tariff ought to be changed, and I have given the matter a good deal of study. I am quite sure that the idea of tariff revision would inaugurate contention and sectional differences which would go a great deal further toward breaking up Republican harmony and interfering with Republican success, than letting things alone would. If you know of anything on which the tariff ought to be changed, or any one else does, such change can be made in the natural ordinary way, by amendment, but I think that a spectacular revision of the tariff would be most disastrous. I do not mean by this that if any one can show me an item which ought to be reduced or which ought to be increased, I am not entirely willing to do what I can in that direction, but I see no necessity for a complete revision of the tariff, and I do not believe that the people who are talking about it can show such a necessity.

To others he explained that while it might be deemed wise, if not necessary, to make some amendments to

the Tariff law, personally, and from a business and economic standpoint, he thought it was entirely unnecessary. He recognized that there was undoubtedly a sentiment in the country that there should be some changes. The duty on many articles was greater than was necessary for the protection of the industry. It was hard to make people believe that when this was an acknowledged fact, it did not give opportunity for manufacturers and especially trusts, to make exorbitant and unconscionable profits. Personally he did not believe this to be true. He wrote:

> I do not believe that an unnecessarily high duty exerts any influence whatever upon prices. If there is a demand for the goods or articles, the price will be good. If the demand exceeds the supply, the price will be abnormal. If the demand falls off and the supply exceeds the demand, the price will be normal, or indeed, abnormally low, but it is the most difficult thing in the world to make people understand this, and even men who have called themselves protectionists are carried away with the idea that high rates of duty are stimulating to the trusts, and the trusts are oppressing the people.

But he hit the real secret of the clamor for revision when he said:

> The Republican newspaper demand for it, I think, comes largely from a desire to have the duty taken off from wood pulp and printing paper. It is the old story—a man wants his article free and the duty on every one else's. They cannot see that protection is a system which, if it is to be applied, should be applied so as to protect every industry.

The "dumping" question gave him some concern as a political consideration. He acknowledged that the

strongest argument he had heard was that manufacturers were selling goods to foreigners at a less price than they were charging in the home market. But he explained:

No revision of the tariff which still left a protective margin could prevent that, and I am by no means certain that it is not a good thing to have it done. We want a foreign market for our goods, and the foreign market cannot be established except by sales at cost or under cost. A prudent manufacturer, seeking to establish a foreign market, might well make concessions for the purpose of introducing his goods which would leave him no profit. Now, I take it, no one proposes to make such a tariff that a man cannot have some profit on what he manufactures, so that I do not see that any radical reduction in the tariff duties, there still being a protective margin, would in any way cure or lessen the evil, if it is one, of selling goods abroad at cheaper rates than we sell them in the home market, and when you come to think of it, what a foolish thing it would be for Germany or England, or any of our competitors, to pass a law providing that their manufacturers should not sell their goods in America cheaper than in Germany or England.

With the Boston cry for reciprocity with Canada he had no patience. That was a proposition which in existing circumstances, he regarded as utterly impracticable. To Wharton Barker of Philadelphia, he wrote on December 5, 1904:

I do not think that outside of Boston there is in New England any considerable sentiment one way or the other with reference to what is called "Canadian reciprocity." I certainly have never heard it mentioned in Connecticut as a matter especially desirable. I am a little surprised at the Boston craze. They seem to take it for granted there

that Canadian reciprocity is something which the United States can promote and accomplish all by itself, and that any kind of reciprocal trade arrangement would be to the advantage of Boston. My understanding, though of course I may be mistaken, is that Canada has no desire to make any reciprocal arrangement with us—and it takes two to make a bargain. So much for the present talk about Canadian reciprocity. Until it be ascertained that Canada is ready to treat with us on that subject, it is simply an academic proposition, and I do not think that it will be developed. What I have said with regard to Canadian reciprocity, so-called, applies with equal force to the question of a more complete commercial union. The answer to it is that Canada does not take kindly to any such proposition, and it is useless for the United States to attempt to force it upon Canada. When Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the people who with him control the political destinies of Canada are ready to take up either partial or complete reciprocal trade arrangements, it may be worth while to discuss what would be of advantage to the United States —a pretty broad subject, by the way—but so long as they are hostile to anything of the sort, I do not think that we will gain anything by agitating it.

So he held his course without deviation, until as he had predicted, the cry for tariff revision was lost in the louder cry for regulation of railroad rates. He had attained his purpose, and it was due to his influence more than to any other, that the Dingley law was not wantonly supplanted at that time.

CHAPTER XXX

ANTIQUATED SENATE WAYS

The Rules of the Senate—Advocates Open Executive Sessions—Speech of April 13, 1886—Proposes Limitation of Debate.

MR. PLATT was as little of an inconoclast as any man who ever sat in the United States Senate. His respect for custom and tradition was ingrained. He was instinctively conservative, yet it was his striking characteristic that as he advanced in years he progressed in intellectual flexibility, adapting himself with marked facility to the enlarged requirements of an expanding people. His was always an inquiring mind; with all his natural respect for authority, he refused to subscribe to its demands until convinced of valid reasons. No precedent could claim his allegiance without due presentation of credentials. His first consideration always was for the practical, and theories were useless which could not be enforced.

The standing rules of the Senate he did not regard as in themselves a sacred writing, but merely as a means adapted to an end, and when they failed to fill the measure of what he thought to be the Senate's need, he did not hesitate to urge a change. He had not been in the Senate long before the grotesque incongruity of the executive session fetich dawned upon him. Even in those days the executive session was a byword and reproach, the ban of secrecy yielding

to the first gentle touch of the reporter's wand, yet in many years there had not been a serious suggestion in the Senate that the useless rule be changed. In 1841, William Allen of Ohio introduced a resolution for open sessions, which was promptly laid on the table; he renewed it subsequently three times without success. In 1853 Salmon P. Chase submitted a resolution abolishing secret sessions, and Charles Sumner urged its adoption. In the following session the resolution was renewed and laid on the table. That was all. There was therefore little encouragement for persistence in this line of endeavor, yet Mr. Platt in January, 1886, gave the Senate another opportunity to mend its ways. It was in the first year of President Cleveland's administration, and the notorious character of some of his nominations, subject to confirmation by the Senate behind closed doors, gave pertinency to Mr. Platt's proposal. On January 29, 1886, he submitted a resolution which was promptly reported adversely by the Committee on Rules, and which, as afterwards modified by him, read as follows:

Resolved, That executive nominations shall hereafter be considered and acted upon in open session except when otherwise ordered by vote of the Senate. And so much of Section 2, Rule XXXVI., and Section 2, Rule XXXVIII. of the standing rules of the Senate as conflicts with or is inconsistent with the above is to the extent of such inconsistency rescinded.

Upon this resolution on April 13th, he delivered a carefully prepared speech, although the hopelessness of action was apparent. This speech revealed a great deal of research into the records of the Senate from the beginning of the Government, and demonstrated

that the rule of secrecy could not claim the sanction of the founders of the Republic, that the departure from early methods had been in the line of greater strictness and in the line of inflicting penalties for disclosure. He admitted that whatever secrecy was implied from closed doors existed at the beginning of the Government, but he denied that any more existed than was thus implied:

> That any greater secrecy existed in relation to the consideration of executive business than existed with the consideration of legislative business while the Senate sat with closed doors, I deny. It was not until 1800, eleven years after the Senate commenced its sessions and six years after the doors were opened for legislative business, that any rule of secrecy was applied to any kind of business transacted in executive session. So whatever secrecy the fathers observed for six years after the Senate was opened as to legislative business was the same secrecy with regard to executive business that they had at first adopted with regard to legislative business and no more.

He showed by references to history, that even in the Continental Congress which sat with closed doors, and in the legislative sessions of the Senate, which for the first five years were held with closed doors, no rigid secrecy was maintained. Having demolished the historical argument he made an earnest plea for publicity. Secrecy he declared to be a relic of monarchical power and privilege, a lineal descendant of the privy council. With open sessions he asserted bad men would not be presented to the Senate for discussion:

> The incompetent will not be presented here for us to discuss as they are now presented, if it be understood that their characters and qualifications are open to public

discussion, and are to receive public consideration. The whole business of appointing men to office will change. We shall have fewer recommendations of bad men, fewer nominations of bad men, fewer confirmations of bad men, if publicity can attend the whole business of office-seeking and office-getting from the White House to the Senate.

Moreover, he declared as the result of some years' experience:

I affirm now that I never have heard a word said in executive session which ought to have been said there, or which any person thought ought to have been said there, which might not just as well and just as appropriately have been said in open session in relation to the confirmation of nominations.

Public sentiment, he asserted, demanded the adoption of the rule. Out of nearly 14,000 newspapers, 10,000 had declared their belief that the measure should be adopted. "The country newspapers, which represent the real sentiment of the country, which go where the minister and the schoolmaster do not enter, and where the voice of the Senate does not otherwise go" had declared in favor of the measure:

Whence arises this demand? It is not idle curiosity. It is not that a few reporters may look in on these proceedings and send the news to the journals which they represent. Oh, no; that is not it. It is the desire of the people for a better administration of the government. It is a desire of the people that the standard of official life and character shall be elevated; and they know the only way to do it is by having the qualifications of men discussed openly in the Senate chamber.

He had a more convincing argument:

But, Mr. President, there is no secrecy. We are hugging an old custom for its name rather than for its actual

results. We are pinning the Senate to the skirts of an ancient tradition which, as to any useful result, is sterile and barren. There is no secrecy possible. There never has been any secrecy possible in any matter about which the public desired information that took place in executive session. I do not say how much or how little, or whether any at all, of the reports which we see from day to day in the newspapers published after each executive session is true, but I think I am justified, without revealing any secrets of executive session, without doing what the Senator from Vermont intimated in his colloquy the other day with the Senator from Kentucky was done—violating a senatorial oath and becoming guilty of senatorial perjury—I believe I may say that the secrets of this body are to a greater or less degree exposed and disclosed. Mixed they may be with untruth, mixed they may be with the fertile imagination of the newspaper reporter, nevertheless no Senator will deny me in saying that more or less of what occurs in executive session is disclosed. It is disclosed either by Senators or by the officers of the Senate, and when I say that I do not mean to cast the slightest suspicion upon the officers of the Senate. I do not want to be in a body where I am subjected to the suspicion of dishonorable disclosure. We are a class here, as lawyers, as clergymen, as bank presidents, and as business men are a class; and when one does a thing that is discreditable we all suffer. . . .

What a farce it is, Mr. President. The whole community, the world, are laughing at us that we pretend to have secret sessions. We ourselves would be infinitely better off if every word that is said here were known to the remotest portion of the globe than with the pretended publications of what we do and say mixed up with the imagination of reporters and the untruthfulness which accompanies the reports.

It was not to be expected that the Senate would change its immemorial practice, and no action was

ever taken on the resolution after its rejection by the Committee on Rules. Public interest died away and has never been revived in anything like the same degree. There have been spasmodic attempts on the part of the Senate to enforce the rule of secrecy by conducting farcical investigations into the manner in which the proceedings of executive sessions have been divulged, but public sentiment apparently has settled into a contented acceptance of the inevitable, satisfied in the knowledge that the proceedings of so-called secret sessions are, in effect, as widely published as any other proceedings of the Senate.

Mr. Platt did not disturb the serenity of the Senate again in regard to its rules until the time arrived when, in his judgment, as in the judgment of many other Senators, the practice of interminable debate had passed all reasonable bounds.

In the first session of the Fifty-first Congress, the Elections bill, sometimes called the Force bill, was prevented from coming to a vote by the dilatory tactics of the Democratic minority under the lead of Arthur P. Gorman. The McKinley Tariff bill narrowly escaped a like fate. While the minority were thus engaged in pressing to the limit of endurance their privilege of unlimited debate, the leaders of the majority were groping for a remedy. Some form of closure seemed indispensable, but it was not easy to devise a practical amendment to the rules. Mr. Hoar submitted an amendment providing for a vote upon questions before the Senate under certain conditions, within a reasonable time. Mr. Platt considered the introduction of an amendment to the same end, and so did others. All propositions were referred to the Committee on Rules, but nothing was done about them during the

first session of the Congress, although there was more or less debate. The Tariff bill was enacted; the Elections bill went over with the understanding that it was to be taken up during the short session. The Democratic victory at the fall elections, insuring a Democratic House after March 4th, did not incline the Democrats of the Senate to forego during the short session, any of the advantages they held under the rules, and it was evident that the Elections bill, which had the right of way, could not become a law before the end of the Congress, in spite of the persistency with which it was pressed by Mr. Hoar, the Chairman of the Committee having it in charge. On December 29th, accordingly, Mr. Aldrich, Chairman of the Committee on Rules, and even then beginning to receive recognition as the leader of the Senate, submitted an amendment, based on the amendment drawn by Mr. Hoar, and operative by its terms only "during the remainder of this session." It was debated religiously for several days and then, since it evidently stood as little chance of reaching a vote as the Elections bill itself, it quietly disappeared among the mists of "unfinished business."

The next heard in the Senate of the proposal to limit debate was during the long summer filibuster of 1893, when the endeavors of the free-silver Senators, to prevent a vote on the Sherman law repeal, sorely tried the patience of the Senate and the people. As soon as the Democratic intention became manifest Republican leaders began to figure on some device to thwart it, and again the practicability of closure entered into their consultations. Mr. Platt especially was in earnest. When Democratic Senators refrained from voting, for the obvious purpose of breaking a quorum, he lectured them roundly for their neglect

of duty, and their disregard for the obligations of their office. On October 13th, after the country had been treated to the unseemly spectacle for weeks he broke out hotly against Senator Teller who had frankly asserted his privilege to decline to answer on a roll-call whenever the minority thought it necessary to resort to obstructive tactics. He declared:

I cannot assent to the very remarkable position which the Senator from Colorado has taken, which, if I understand it, is in plain words this: That if he does not like proposed legislation, he will not only violate his constitutional duty, but, as it seems to me, his constitutional oath.

The rules of the Senate require that every Senator shall vote unless excused, and they require that absent Senators shall be brought here, that their attendance shall be compelled, and, when compelled, the rules require that they shall vote, unless excused.

I supposed when I swore to support the Constitution and to discharge the duties of a Senator, that a constitutional duty rested upon me to observe the rules of the Senate.

The Constitution provides for the rules of the Senate, and yet we hear, and hear I think for the first time in the history of the Senate, the deliberate statement made by a Senator that he will not observe the rules of the Senate, because he is in a minority and does not want the majority legislation to pass. It is one of the things which is fast bringing the Senate into disgrace in the United States. . . .

I do not see how any Senator can sit in his seat when the roll is called and not answer to his name. I remember when I first came to the Senate, in the session of 1879, in the heat of party strife one evening, in common with other Senators, I did refuse to answer to my name when the roll was called, but, upon reflection, I made up my mind that I never should again, and I think I have never under any state of excitement done it since that time. If I

have, it has been in my judgment wrong and it cannot be defended.

Prior to this outburst he had introduced an amendment providing for closure, which, for palpable reasons, was never brought to a vote.[1]

In addressing the Senate in its support two days after presenting it, he declared:

We as a Senate are fast losing the respect of the people of the United States. We are fast being considered a body that exists for the purpose of retarding and obstructing legislation. We are being compared in the minds of the people of this country to the House of Lords in England, and the reason for it is that under our rules it is impossible, or nearly impossible, to obtain action when there is any considerable opposition to a bill here.

I think, Mr. President, that when the necessity and the propriety of a change of the rules so as to reasonably facilitate the transaction of business is thus brought to our attention, it is the best time to enter upon that work. I know it will be said that in the present condition of affairs in the Senate we can not adopt such a rule, but I believe

[1] The amendment, presented on September 19th, was as follows: *Resolved*, That Rule IX of the Senate be amended by adding the following section:

SECTION 2. Whenever any bill is pending before the Senate as unfinished business, the presiding officer shall, upon the written request of a majority of the Senators, fix a day and hour, and notify the Senate thereof, when general debate shall cease thereon, which time shall be not less than five days from the submission of such request; and he shall also fix a subsequent day and hour, and notify the Senate thereof, when the vote shall be taken on the bill or resolution, and any amendment thereto, without further debate; the time for taking the vote to be not more than two days later than the time when general debate is to cease; and in the interval between the closing of general debate and the taking of the vote, no Senator shall speak more than five minutes, nor more than once, upon the same proposition.

that we can adopt it by a vote of the Senate just as easily as we can pass the repeal bill, and just as quickly.

He believed that a large majority of the Republicans in the Senate would favor the adoption of the rule. The consideration of the resolution, if delayed factiously, would demonstrate more clearly than could be demonstrated in the consideration of the repeal bill that the opposition was engaged in obstructing and filibustering:

> Mr. President, the trouble is that the rules of the Senate permit unlimited debate. It is not the courtesy of the Senate, as is generally supposed, that is invoked; it is the right under the rules for any member of the Senate to speak when he pleases, as long as he pleases, and as often as he pleases, upon any pending proposition. . . .
>
> It comes, then, to this: That there are just two ways under our rules by which a vote can be obtained. One is by getting unanimous consent—the consent of each Senator to take the vote at a certain time. It has been demonstrated, if it is not perfectly patent to every Senator in the chamber, that that method of obtaining a vote can not be made available upon the present measure. . . .
>
> Next comes what is sometimes known as the process of "sitting it out," that is for the friends of a bill to remain in continuous session until the opponents of it are so physically exhausted that they can not struggle any longer. That may or may not result in a vote either upon this measure or upon any great measure upon which a determined contest is made. . . .
>
> Such a practice is almost inhuman. It smacks of the methods of obtaining a verdict by a jury where the jury is locked up continuously until they give a verdict. The proposition is to force the minority to surrender upon a test of physical endurance. The result usually is that the majority surrenders upon the test of physical endurance.

Mr. President, that being the case, why may we not just as well try to change our rules? Is not that the best way to accomplish the purpose of those senators, myself included, who desire a vote upon this subject?

As soon as the repeal bill had been enacted, the question of closure drifted along without serious consideration for several years. Mr. Platt and others gave it some thought, but that he was not disposed wantonly to disarrange the orderly proceedings of the Senate, is shown by his mild reference to closure in a speech which he delivered in response to the toast "The United States Senate" at the Bridgeport Centennial banquet in 1900. After dwelling briefly on the greatness of the United States, and the multiplicity of interests involved in legislation, he said:

The Senate of such a nation must, as a matter of course, be a body wherein discussion and deliberation are not unduly limited. I know that the people at times become impatient because the Senate acts so slowly, and that it seems as if a minority was able to prevent action at all. Yet we must choose between ill-considered and well-considered action. In the Senate of a great country such as I have described, great and momentous questions constantly arise. To be rightly decided they must be intelligently decided. It is no slight tax upon a Senator's industry and intellectual capacity, to arrive at a thorough understanding of these great questions. If the people require that action shall be based on a comprehensive knowledge of the subject under consideration, it is evident that each question should at least be fairly discussed. The right of unlimited debate may be abused, and yet, with all its abuses, it is a safer rule to allow it than to stifle debate in order to secure immediate action. Minorities have rights as well as majorities, and it is as essential to the welfare of the public that their rights should be fairly recognized

as it is that the will of the majority should govern. I would be, and I am, in favor of a reasonable limitation of debate in the Senate, but I am not in favor of putting into the hands of the majority the power to cut off fair debate by the minority. This question of the limitation of debate in the Senate is not only a delicate but most important one. If any rule can be devised by which, when a measure has been fairly and sufficiently debated, it can be brought to a vote, a great reform would be accomplished. But the difficulty of prescribing a rule for the limitation of debate which shall apply to all questions alike, is very great. I sincerely hope, however, that some plan may be devised by which, without injustice to the minority, the majority may be able to secure action more promptly than at present. Bills quite frequently come from the House of Representatives intended to put into law certain principles which commend themselves to the judgment of the people, the specific provisions of which might work great injury. Wise and intelligent legislation must foresee and forecast as well the effect of particular provisions as the adoption of important principles. Let me illustrate by reference to measures which are likely to come before the next session of the Senate. The session is limited to three months, expiring by limitation of law on the fourth of March next. Among other matters which will be pressed for consideration are the Hay-Pauncefote treaty, modifying the terms of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty with England, the commercial treaties, commonly called reciprocity treaties, which affect most of the great industries of the country; and, in general legislation, the Nicaragua Canal bill, the Shipping bill; bills for the re-organization of the army, for the increase of the navy, for the reduction of the internal-revenue war taxes; possibly, legislation for the Philippines and to determine our relations with Cuba; bills and a constitutional amendment relating to trusts, relating to the hours of labor and convict-made goods; regulating the granting of injunctions in controversies between employers

and employed; the apportionment of the next House of Representatives, fifteen general appropriation bills, each of which raises questions of vast moment, and which in their aggregate provide for the expenditure of at least five hundred millions of dollars. Now, if the Senate is to deal intelligently with these questions, each Senator must have a thorough and intelligent comprehension of them in all their bearings, and this can come only from intense study, unremitting application, and the exercise of wise judgment. Legislation is no child's play. Mistakes involve the happiness and welfare of the people.

When he recited the catalogue of measures pressing upon the coming short session of the Senate for consideration, he was not endowed with the gift of prophecy, for he did not foresee how much parliamentary skill it would take to enact the most important legislation of all—the measure for the adjustment of the relations between the United States and the republic of Cuba, a measure which he had to impose as a rider upon the Army Appropriation bill in order to insure consideration without debate.

The privilege of unlimited oratory would have put it in the power of a single Senator in the closing days of the session to prevent action on the Platt Amendment if proposed as an independent bill and compel the President to call an extra session for its consideration; while other important measures, less urgently demanded, failed for a like reason to receive any consideration whatever. This trying experience, which kept the leaders of the Senate on edge for weeks, impelled them to seek an avenue of relief.

On March 5, 1901, the first business day of the special session of the Senate, called at the beginning of the second McKinley administration, Mr. Platt

gave notice of an amendment which he proposed to offer to the rules—the same in terms as that originally drawn by Mr. Hoar in the Fifty-first Congress and submitted for the Rules Committee by Mr. Aldrich.[1]

It was not acted on during the brief opening session. Before Congress met in regular session the following December, the country had been stirred by the assas-

[1] *Resolved*, That for the remainder of this session the rules of the Senate be amended by adding thereto the following: When any bill, resolution, or other question shall have been under consideration for a reasonable time, it shall be in order for any Senator to demand that debate thereon be closed. On such demand no debate shall be in order, and pending such demand no other motion except one motion to adjourn shall be made. If such demand be seconded by a majority of the Senators present, the question shall forthwith be taken thereon without debate. If the Senate shall decide to close debate on any bill, resolution, or other question, the measure shall take precedence of all other business whatever, and the question shall be put upon the amendments, if any, then pending, and upon the measure in its successive stages, according to the rules of the Senate, but without further debate except that every Senator who may desire shall be permitted to speak upon the measure, including all amendments, not more than once, and not exceeding thirty minutes.

After the Senate shall have decided to close debate as herein provided, no motion shall be in order but a motion to adjourn or to take a recess, when such motions shall be seconded by a majority of the Senate. When either of said motions shall have been lost or shall have failed of a second, it shall not be in order to renew the same until one Senator shall have spoken upon the pending measure, or one vote upon the same shall have intervened.

Pending proceedings under the foregoing rule, no proceeding in respect of a quorum shall be in order until it shall have appeared on a division or on the taking of the yeas and nays that a quorum is not present and voting.

Pending proceedings under the foregoing rule, all questions of order, whether upon appeal or otherwise, shall be decided without debate, and no obstructive or dilatory motion or proceedings of any kind shall be in order.

For the foregoing stated purposes the following rules, namely, VII., VIII., IX., X., XII., XIX., XXII., XXVII., XXVIII., XXXV., and XL., are modified.

sination of President McKinley, a new force was in control at the White House, and the Senate found itself engaged in more absorbing questions than amendments to the rules. Legislative developments, however, were soon to stimulate anew Mr. Platt's interest in the subject.

In the short session of Congress which met in December, 1902, obstruction for the sake of obstruction or revenge became a recognized feature of parliamentary procedure in the Senate. It was used from the beginning to prevent the Statehood bill from coming to a vote. Later the friends of the Statehood bill combined with others in retaliation to stifle with debate the much needed Aldrich Financial bill and the Philippine Tariff bill, while Tillman of South Carolina held Congress by the throat and forced amendments on two important appropriation bills in the last hours of the session. Morgan of Alabama deliberately talked over the fourth of March the treaty with Colombia providing for the cession of rights on the Isthmus, and compelled a special session of the Senate for the ratification of the Colombian and the Cuban reciprocity treaties. The country was aroused by all this. Mr. Cannon as Chairman of the Appropriations Committee focussed attention on the rules of the Senate by denouncing in the House the practice which in effect permitted legislation only by unanimous consent. Even so cautious a Senator as Allison of Iowa was stung into offering a resolution directing the Rules Committee to consider whether any changes should be made imposing a limit on debate. Mr. Hoar and Mr. Platt proposed amendments providing for closure under certain conditions. Nothing was done beyond referring these proposals to the Committee, but after the special session came to an

end Mr. Platt began at once to gather material with a view to pressing his amendment at the regular session the following winter. He did not think it possible to get the previous question in its naked form or any such drastic rules as obtained in the House, which to his mind resulted in the passage of ill-considered measures:

> What ought to be done in the Senate, in my judgment, is to allow reasonable opportunity for debate, and then compel a vote, but what is reasonable at one time in the session, would be entirely unreasonable at another time. For instance—two or three weeks' debate in the early part of a session, upon an important measure, would be none too much, perhaps, while two days' debate at the end of a session would enable opponents of a measure to kill it, because they could talk the time out. The problem, and it is not of easy solution, is to get a rule which will be fair at different periods of the session. I think my proposition, that two fifths of the Senators may fix the time when a vote shall be taken, and limit the length of speeches to be made in the interim, comes as near to it as anything I have heard suggested, but perhaps that is not perfect. At any rate, I shall try to push the matter at the commencement of the next session.[1]

He had in mind especially Cuban reciprocity, but an amendment to the rules proved to be unnecessary for the immediate purpose. Public sentiment was slowly at work during the summer. President Roosevelt called Congress in special session in November for the express purpose of enacting legislation to carry the Cuban treaty into effect. The bill was duly passed and limitation of debate, no longer demanded for a particular object of legislation, was lost to sight once more.

[1] Letter to Jacob L. Greene, March 28, 1903.

CHAPTER XXXI

DIGNITY OF THE SENATE

"Legislation by Unanimous Consent"—The Senate not Decadent—
Not a Rich Man's Club—Opposes Seating of Quay—
The Tillman-McLaurin Episode.

ON every fit occasion the Connecticut Senator used plain speech concerning the curious growth known as the "Rules of the Senate." The habit of transacting business by unanimous consent was especially irritating and he was for revising the rules so as to do away with it altogether. In the spring of 1904 there was a bill before the Senate to allow Alaska to be represented by a delegate in Congress. Mr. Platt was opposed to it for the same reason that he would have opposed a delegate from the Philippines—because he feared it would be the entering wedge for statehood, and he was radically hostile to any proposition giving statehood to non-contiguous territory. Those in charge of the bill secured unanimous consent one day, fixing the time for its consideration. When the time arrived he was not ready to speak because he did not have at hand certain documents to which he wished to refer, but those who had secured unanimous consent insisted on taking the bill up at once. The Senator's wrath was roused. He spoke bluntly and frankly:

It seems to me that the Senate of the United States ought to provide by its rules the method in which it will

do business, and that the practice which has sprung up here of trying to do things by unanimous consent is in no way a substitute for rules which ought to be provided for the orderly transaction of the business of the Senate.

There never is a unanimous consent given here which does not bind some Senator in some way in which the Senator did not expect to be bound and did not suppose he was bound. I have seen unanimous consent asked for and given when there were not ten Senators in the Senate; and because asked for and given under these circumstances, there was supposed to be some sort of an obligation upon the Senators not present, and who would not, perhaps, have given their assent if they had been present, that that unanimous consent should be kept to the letter, and the fraction of the letter, that "the pound of flesh" should be taken, and that nothing should by any means interfere with the carrying out of such a unanimous-consent agreement. I do not intend hereafter to give my assent to fixing a time for action upon any bill. . . . The courtesy of the Senate is a mysterious, a fearful, and a wonderful thing. It is to be exercised on occasions, and on other occasions it is not to be exercised. I think that the experience of this day most certainly points to the necessity of having some rule in the Senate by which the Senate can do business in an orderly way and the rights of no Senator and the understandings of no Senator be invaded or infringed upon. I do not think that a previous question pure and simple ought to be adopted in this Senate; but I do think there ought to be some rule whereby debate can be limited to a reasonable time, and a time fixed for the taking of a vote otherwise than by unanimous consent, obtained in a thin Senate, when perhaps not more than five or six Senators are here.

Yet the slight respect in which he held some of its traditions was quite in keeping with his scrupulous regard for the Senate's essential dignities. There were

no questions to which he gave more conscientious thought than those concerning its integrity, and no criticism to which he was more keenly sensitive. He was proud of the body to which he belonged. He believed that the framers of the Constitution, under the lead of Roger Sherman and Oliver Ellsworth of Connecticut, builded wisely when by providing for equal representation of States, large and small, for long terms of service, and for election by the Legislatures instead of by popular vote, they put the members of one branch of Congress beyond the reach of temporary clamor. He was convinced that in the equal independence of House and Senate rested the hope of safe and permanent legislation. He was impatient with those who bewailed the decadence of the Senate. In his view the average of ability among Senators was much higher in the later days than in the earlier time, when men of larger fame commanded national applause. With the multiplicity of interests attending the growth of the country, the questions to be considered in Congress had become more complex and exacting, carried more far-reaching consequences, and called for more accurate and comprehensive knowledge than ever before. "A Senator who comes now to this chamber" he said in eulogizing Mr. George of Mississippi, "meets with an average ability with which the Senators of older times did not have to contend. No man can be pre-eminently conspicuous here to-day. There is too much of force, of learning, of strength, of ability here for any one man to stand head and shoulders above his associates." He used to say that in the Senate of his day there were more men in proportion to the membership who were well equipped to deal with the questions of the present than there

were in the days of Webster and his contemporaries equipped to deal with the questions of the past, and he had known Senators who would not lose in comparison with those who were called the giants of former days. At a time when the outcry against the Senate as a "millionaires' club" was unusually strident, he rose to the defence of his associates. "It is not a body of rich men" he said, "whatever the popular belief in this respect may be":

In a membership of ninety there may be ten who would be called millionaires, and a few, perhaps four or five, who are the possessors of several millions. Of the remaining eighty members, about one half may be considered in comfortable circumstances, or what would be called in any community fairly well off, and the other half would be ranked as poor men in any community. I think in no body of men to be found anywhere in the world is a man more justly and critically measured for what he really is than in the United States Senate, and in no body of men is influence more justly proportioned to ability and wise judgment than in the Senate. A Senator's wealth may count in social life, but it cuts little figure in the Senate. To be influential in the councils of the Senate one must have convinced his colleagues that he has intellect, sound judgment, and absolute integrity. Whoever possesses these makes the influence of his State felt in the national Senate. He may possess money, but without the qualities that I have mentioned he is little more than a cipher there. The Senator poorest in worldly goods may weigh most in the deliberations of that body, and the man richest in worldly possessions may weigh the least.[1]

Such exhibitions of bad blood as occasionally marred the proceedings of the Senate filled him with resent-

[1] Bridgeport Centennial banquet, 1900.

ment. When in February, 1902, Tillman and McLaurin of South Carolina came to blows on the floor, he voted for the resolutions of censure which were adopted, but explained that he did so reluctantly because except by the passage of the resolutions he saw no way in which the Senate could inflict any punishment upon those who were guilty of disorder. He had a personal liking for Tillman, but he did not regard the penalty as in any way commensurate with the offence. A few days later he introduced a resolution declaring it to be in the power of the Senate to punish a member for disorderly behavior by debarring him from participating in its proceedings, and still later, writing to a friend he voiced his indignation:

We have not got through with the Tillman question yet. After we had apologized to him, as you saw in reading the proceedings, I introduced a resolution to the effect that the Senate had power, in punishing for disorderly behavior, to disbar a Senator from participation in the proceedings of the Senate. That raised the question of our right, and that has gone to the Committee on Privileges and Elections and they will make a report upon it, I think. Their claim that we cannot do it because it deprives the State of equal representation in the Senate is merest bosh, and yet it seems to trouble a good many people. If Tillman does not behave himself now I think that we will expel him, though we have not got two thirds vote ourselves, and some of our Republicans are tender-footed. He knows better. His repeated performances are deliberate, and not due to a lack of proper understanding of the proprieties and privileges of the Senate. What he does, he does with malice prepense and aforethought. I am hot about it.[1]

[1] Letter to John H. Flagg, March 5, 1902.

Whenever a question arose as to the right of a Senator to his seat, he was exacting in his demand that the precedents of the Senate should be strictly followed and that the requirements of the Constitution should meet with rigid compliance. In such a case he never permitted personal or partisan considerations to sway his judgment. During the '90's there was an epidemic of deadlocks in State Legislatures resulting in a failure to elect a Senator and the subsequent appointment by the Governor of some one to fill the vacancy. In every instance Mr. Platt held that the one thus appointed was not entitled to a seat; that a vacancy could not constitutionally be filled by appointment unless it had first happened while the Legislature was not in session. Thus in the case of Corbett appointed by the Governor of Oregon he voted against seating, although a sound-money Republican vote would have proved handy in the Senate at the time. Against his personal and party inclinations he took a similar position when the case of Matthew Stanley Quay came before the Senate in the springof 1900. Quay had been for twelve years a Senator of influence, personally well liked by political friends and opponents. When the time for his third election came around, the Pennsylvania Legislature was in deadlock, and after its adjournment the Governor appointed him. Some of the strongest Republican lawyers in the Senate favored giving him the seat, and many Democrats would gladly have had him succeed. Mr. Platt was no less friendly than others, but he felt compelled to take the lead in the debate against giving Quay the seat. He cited a formidable array of precedents and authorities to sustain his contention. He especially resented an intimation that the majority against Corbett had

been due to other than constitutional considerations:

I do not believe that sixteen Senators in this body voted to reject Mr. Corbett because he was a gold standard Republican. The charge is one which reflects greater dishonor upon the Senate of the United States than any charge that has ever been made against it.

The question he declared was whether anything could ever be considered settled in the Senate. Were the uniform precedents and unbroken decisions of over one hundred years to be observed, or were those precedents to be disregarded and those decisions to be overruled upon the ground of personal or political friendship:

There are no enemies of Mr. Quay here. In the consideration of this case there should be no friends—that is to say, no one on account of his friendship should vote for Mr. Quay—no one should vote for him on that ground alone. Let it once go out to the people of this country that a Senator is to be seated because a majority of the Senate like him and because he is endeared to them by long association, because he is a good man or a brave man; and that one who is not liked and is not endeared to them by association, who cannot be said to be a great man or a brave man, is not to be seated, the Senate from that hour will sink into deserved disrepute. . . . The present claimant of this seat in the Senate, who thought less than two years ago that Mr. Corbett should be rejected, now comes with a case admittedly weaker and asks a decision in his favor. If the Senate should accede to his request, the people will have a right to ask and will not be slow to ask upon what ground the reversal of the Senate's decision rests. Thereafter, Mr. President, whoever shall desire to aim a shaft of satire against the inconstancy,

the favoritism, the partiality of the Senate, will find one ready pointed for his bow.[1]

By the narrowest possible margin the Senate refused to seat Quay. Platt's vote would have turned the scale.

[1] *Congressional Record*, 1st Session, Fifty-sixth Congress, p. 4550.

CHAPTER XXXII

LABOR AND CAPITAL

An Unbiassed Judge—Opposed to Radical Measures—A Friend of the Workingman—Defeats Anti-Injunction and Eight-Hour Bills—Supports President Roosevelt in Coal Strike and Northern Securities Case—Address before Workingmen's Club at Hartford—Opposition to Anti-Option Bill—Speech of January 17–19, 1893.

BORN and brought up on a farm—the most natural and most wholesome of workshops—dependent upon his own efforts for his education and his training in the law, a successful lawyer in causes affecting business enterprise, yet never gifted with the genius for pecuniary gain, Orville Platt came into public life endowed with an equipment for weighing fairly questions concerning capital and labor, and as a Senator he gave to their study the ripest judgment of a balanced mind.

In the practice of his profession in Meriden before entering the Senate, he had attained an annual income of probably $25,000, but that was only for a little time, and he had met with financial reverses, so that throughout his life he felt the need of comforts which money might have bought. He cared nothing for money in itself, yet there never was a time during all his years in Washington when he was free from irritating financial perplexities; when he did not have to "squirrel" the checks he received from magazines

for an occasional article in order to insure a few days' summer outing in the Adirondacks; when he did not feel compelled to decline courtesies which he knew he could not afford to return. Throughout his public life he was entirely dependent on his salary, and if he had retired from the Senate at any time after he entered it, he would have been obliged to turn his hand at once to the task of earning his daily bread. When he died he left as a legacy little except his good name. Yet, lacking for himself the money sense, he was a most conscientious conservator of the trust of others; he respected thrift and recognized the ability and energy which developed industries and utilized capital to the community's general good.

From the beginning of his professional career, Mr. Platt was in close touch with business interests. He believed in the integrity of the ordinary man of affairs and he deprecated irresponsible attacks upon those who had accumulated wealth. At the same time he was progressive. He sympathized with those who strove for an adjustment of the relations between labor and capital, and he recognized with a clearness of vision, which increased as he grew older, that there was no more dangerous enemy of the public than the unreasoning man of wealth, who refused to tolerate even mild discussion of the duty of concentrated capital to the community, and who cried out against all agitation of sociological questions as anarchistic and revolutionary. Thus holding an even scale, had he lived a little longer, he would have been a powerful influence for good in stirring times, the unrest of which is still upon us.

So far as his own political fortunes were concerned, he apparently was indifferent alike to organized labor

and to organized capital. He went straight his own way, uninfluenced by the threats or the blandishments of either. The great struggle of the future he believed was to be between the forces of socialism and the forces of established order. To this belief he often gave utterance, and, looking far ahead, he so shaped his course that to the limit of his power and opportunity he might contribute to the wisest issue of the combat:

> Men are declaiming and agitating to-day not for the equal rights of man, but for the equal possessions of man; that destroys equal rights! The trouble is not so much that there are millionaires in the country, as it is that there are so many people who want to be millionaires, and do not care how they get to be so.[1]

His great and genuine interest in the American workingman and his regard for the nobility and dignity of labor were manifest in his public utterances and not only in his speech but in his conduct, for no man ever lived who came nearer to meeting his fellow creatures on a footing of equality. When the bill creating the Department of Agriculture with a Cabinet officer at its head was before the Senate in 1888, he objected to it on the ground that it was framed to benefit peculiarly "the agriculturists who are at the top, not the agriculturists who are at the bottom." He pleaded for recognition of the farm laborer. Mr. Morgan of Alabama had remarked patronizingly:

> There are in the Senate chamber, I dare say, Senators who have come up from what are called the inferior or humble classes of society, whose fathers and mothers, with themselves toiled in the field for the bread of life until perhaps fifteen or twenty years of age.

[1] Address on Lincoln, Republican Club, Feb. 12, 1897.

This hit the Connecticut farmer's son closely and called from him the cordial response:

I am one of the men who commenced this life in what the Senator from Alabama is pleased to call the inferior or humbler class of society. I worked with my father in the field for the bread of life until I was more than fifteen years of age. Some of the time I worked for other farmers for wages, and I wish right here to enter a protest against that life being called inferior or humbler in any sense than life in any other occupation, profession, or calling. . . . If I were to go back to my native town and attempt to tell its citizens that when I left the farm and its hard labor I went up into a higher station or a more honorable position I should be laughed at, and justly laughed at. There is no higher or more honorable or more dignified station than that of the man who cultivates the farm. I do not feel that my position as Senator is more worthy of respect and honor than was my position on the farm.

In the course of this speech he paid tribute to the men who toil:

Right at the foundation of Republican government lies the principle that the man who works shall be honored—that his position shall be one of dignity, that no man shall have a right to despise him in this free land; and not only that, but that he shall have such wages as will enable him to elevate both himself and his family and those dependent upon him in the scale of moral, social, and financial well-being.

The great underlying force of America is the workingman; the man who labors and toils, the man who receives wages, and just as he is elevated, just as a condition of things exists which lifts him up and makes him more and more a man, enables him to ascend in the scale of manhood, a Republic grows strong; and just in proportion as any policy

exists which beats him down and degrades him in the scale of manhood the Republic grows weak.

With us, this is a government of the people. It is more than that, it is emphatically a government of the common people. It is a government of the men who work. More than that, it is a government of the men who work for wages.

They are the majority of its voters. They set, or ought to set the policy of the government in finance, in education, in civil rights, in all that goes to make a nation great and honorable, prosperous and beneficent. The common people for once in the world here on these shores, away from the tyrants and kings, were given the reins of government. Whatever we have of government we are indebted to them for. Whatever we are to have in the continuance of free government we shall be indebted to them for. . . .

Let no one delude himself with the idea that capital is going to govern this country. There is a great ground-swell of humanity in the world. You can see it abroad in foreign lands, in monarchical governments; but more here in the light of our free institutions this great ground-swell means that humanity is taking an upward step, and that the man who works is to rule, and he is to rule wisely.

You need have no fear of him. You need have no fear that he is going to tear down and destroy free institutions. He is going to conserve and preserve them, because he knows that they are the outcome of the principle which makes him what he is and what he wants to be.

With his understanding of the real needs of honest labor he was intolerant of those who fanned the fires of class hate. His wrath leaped out against Grover Cleveland when, pending his second election and inauguration, that leader seemed bent on rousing the feeling of the laboring classes against protected industries. "He has been sowing the wind ever since election," he wrote to John Flagg. "The whirlwind

harvest is getting ready for the reaping." Bryan in 1896 and 1900 was unthinkable. A few days before the election in 1896 he wrote:

I have in recent speeches tried to impress on my audiences that every one of the objects mentioned in the preamble of the Constitution is directly assailed by this communistic, Bryanistic outfit, and that two of the three great branches into which the power of our government is divided, the executive and the judicial, are directly and intentionally attacked. I think that in the minds of the people all their issues are in these last days being overshadowed by the danger of rebellion which besets us, and that thousands of men who are somewhat in favor of free silver will vote against Bryan because they dare not commit the destinies of this Government to Altgeld, Tillman, and Bryan, who represent in personal characteristics and in their developing careers, the three leading spirits of the French Revolution, Robespierre, Danton, and Marat. The people have seen it this last week. It has not been so before, and I think this foreseen danger will settle the matter against Bryan.

He regarded the result in each of the Bryan campaigns as an escape from a real peril. After the election in 1900, he wrote to A. H. Byington, once his secretary and then Consul at Naples:

That man Bryan is a mystery. He seems to be able to hypnotize his followers and the question of whether he could win or not depended, apparently, on whether he could excite discontent enough among people who ought to be reasonably content, to give him a majority. He did make a very bold and bad appeal. It was the poor against the rich, or the less fortunate against the more fortunate, and I think no one was entirely sure that he was not making inroads on us by that appeal. I think he overdid it. We have so many people in the United States now who have

a little something of their own, or hope to have a little something in the future, that the conservative element is much larger than fellows like Bryan think, and they rather resent the idea of being told that they are poor, and that it is to their interest as poor people to pull everything down over their heads.

Sympathizing with the workingman, yet appreciating the responsibilities of the employer of labor, he was throughout his career a resolute opponent of legislation calculated to create a breach between the two, or inconsistent with his own ideas of what was seemly under the Constitution and the traditions of the law. As a member of the Judiciary Committee he was an obstacle in the way of the Anti-Injunction bill. He and Senator Spooner came to a trial of issues with the Chairman of the Committee in 1902 which resulted in Spooner's indignant withdrawal from the Committee, leaving the burden of opposition upon Platt alone. For many years he, more than any other, prevented the passage of the Eight-Hour bill. His course with regard to the Eight-Hour bill was typical of his method of dealing with all measures which he looked upon as vicious. Although hard pressed by labor organizations in his own State upon whose good will his own political future might have hung, he never faltered in the fight, and he was brutally frank in his response to labor organizations in their importunate demands. "I think that the Federation of Labor is, and has been, impressed with the idea that it can neither frighten nor cajole me," he wrote in 1903. "I really think its members respect me none the less for that."

The Eight-Hour bill was urged with unusual insistence during the session of Congress immediately preceding the Presidential election of 1904; was passed by the

House, and was reported favorably by the Senate Committee. Senator Platt not only opposed the measure in the Senate, interposing his objections at every step, while other Republican leaders were favoring its passage, but he helped to organize and stimulate opposition elsewhere.

While the bill ostensibly applied only to government operatives, Mr. Platt recognized that in actual enforcement it would apply to manufacturers generally. He pointed this out in a personal letter which he wrote on October 21, 1904, to Secretary Metcalf, whose assistants had been investigating for the Department of Commerce and Labor:

> We have a great many manufacturing establishments in Connecticut carrying on a general manufacturing business of course, selling their goods in the open market; but almost all of them accept some work from the Government—that is to say, they agree with the Government, or with a contractor or a sub-contractor, to make certain articles which the Government needs, usually different in some respects from, although related to, their general line of goods. This business, while it is but a small and apparently unimportant part of the whole, does, nevertheless, often enable them to keep their factories going and their laborers employed, when otherwise they would be obliged to dismiss their employees, or run on shorter time. It is utterly impossible, from the nature of the case, that the work upon such goods as are for the use of the Government, should be limited to eight hours unless the entire business of the establishment is to be put upon the same plan. I need not elaborate to show that this is so, and the avowed object of the people who are pushing the Eight-Hour bill is to compel every establishment that does any government work to put its entire factory upon an eight-hour basis. . . . I do not suppose that you know the extent to which this controversy

has been upon my shoulders for the past six years in Congress.

His replies to labor organizations were unmistakable. The Typographical Union of Waterbury sent him a petition urging him to support the bill. He replied by return mail:

I have not thought that the bill is in the interest of the workingman. So far as government establishments are concerned, I would regard it favorably, but if applied to all private establishments doing some government work, either directly for the Government or indirectly for contractors, it seems to me it would only produce confusion in such places, forcing them either to put the establishment as a whole on the eight-hour principle, or cease their work for the Government. The latter I think is what most establishments would do. This would simply make so much less work for the laborer—perhaps necessitating at times, the shutting down of the shop, when otherwise it might be continued running by reason of the government work. I think the bill is not fully understood by the workingman.

To the Central Labor Union of Waterbury, which adopted resolutions and suggestions as to his action upon the Eight-Hour and Anti-Injunction bills, he replied:

I believe that neither of these bills ought to be passed, and that neither is in the interest of the workingman.

To a Hartford manufacturer he wrote:

When I say to you that a year or more ago the State Federation of Labor, holding its annual meeting in Meriden, devoted one afternoon to denunciation of me, saying that I was the one man who had prevented this legislation, and calling upon all members of the labor societies in

Connecticut to see that representatives were elected who would not return me to the Senate of the United States, you will perhaps understand my position pretty fully.

Writing to M. Hartley of New York, he said:

I suppose it is not egotistic to say that the bill would have gone through the Senate except for my sole opposition to it, an opposition by which I have incurred the hostility of all the labor organizations in the United States.

He did not confine his plain speaking to the representatives of labor-unions. He was continually telling needed truths to those who were seeking legislative recognition for vested interests. Only a few weeks before his death, in a letter to a New York capitalist he said:

I do not suppose the Standard Oil people have any idea of the sentiment here against anything that is thought to be of benefit to them. There seems to be a perfect craze now regarding the operations of those concerns called "trusts," particularly the prominent ones.

When Wall Street leaders were trying to defeat the appropriation for carrying into effect the Income Tax law in 1895, he explained to them carefully that it could not be done, and when one of them questioned his judgment he replied testily:

I don't understand the apparently mysterious belief existing among New York corporations that there are votes to be had for the defeat of the appropriation for income tax purposes. People who usually give me credit for knowing how the Senate stands on a given question say: "Our advices are positive that votes enough can be had to beat it." "If the New England Senators vote against it, it is surely beaten." When I ask them from what sources they get their information, they look very wise and say,

"We can't tell you that, but our information is reliable." Now my conclusion is this: That pervaded with the idiotic idea that things can be done in the Senate with money, they have raised a fund and put it in some one's hands who is not only bleeding but fooling them. I know that C— said that he and another man could have $400,000 with which to beat it, but he had concluded that it could n't be done and was going to tell the parties so. I shall find out just who and what the men interested are relying on. They are being fooled, as men always are who get such notions about legislation. There is a decided majority in the Senate for that appropriation and against a proposition to repeal the income tax. Such propositions will get no Democratic vote but Hill's—there are 43 votes. Every Populist unless it is Stewart—there are three more, 46; and there are five Republican votes that will not under any circumstances vote against the appropriation. There are 51 solid votes. Any one who says differently does n't know what he is talking about. I hate to see people so willing to be fooled and bled, and another thing that annoys me is that people will believe that the Senate follows the lead of Quay and Hill. How men who can't see further than this ever make money, I can't see. It must be luck—it is not judgment. You wanted my opinion and I am bound to say what I think.

He endorsed with little qualification the two most telling blows which President Roosevelt struck during his first administration for the man in the street. To a citizen of New Haven he wrote, while the nomination of the President was still pending, in the fall of 1903:

Why are business men not earnest in their support of Mr. Roosevelt? What has he done to forfeit it? I hear two reasons mentioned to account for it. One is his efforts to have the coal strike settled. But I think now that the

matter has gone by, business men forget what was apparent to all careful and thoughtful observers at the time, namely: that if the strike had continued for a fortnight longer, there was serious danger of riot, bloodshed, and indeed, possible revolution. Hungry men are dangerous; men who are unable to find anything with which to warm their houses are dangerous. I regard that as the most critical period in our history since the war, and I believe that if President Roosevelt had not exerted himself to bring that strike to a conclusion, there would have developed a condition of affairs that no man could have foreseen the end of. I think it is not only to his great credit, but to the interests of the whole country that he did bring about a settlement of that strike.

The second thing that I hear of which troubles business men, is that he directed a suit to be brought against the Northern Securities Company for a violation of the law on our statute books—well, he is sworn to execute the laws! If the attorney-general believed, as I am told he advised the President he did believe, that this Company had violated the law,— what is called the "Sherman Anti-Trust law," —what would you have had the President do,—refuse to take action? I do not know what the final action of the courts will be, but I do know that the Court of Appeals, composed of able judges, decided that there was a violation of that law.

I want to say one thing more—the bringing of that suit probably checked the promotion and floating of over-capitalized combinations in the United States, and in that respect it was a blessing. The matter of manufacturing corporations with hundreds of millions of dollars capital, and the unloading of over-capitalized stock upon innocent purchasers, had grown to an extent which was really alarming, and which, if continued, would have brought down the whole financial fabric upon the heads of business men.

In May, 1904, he was invited to address the Working-

men's Club at Hartford, and in the few words he spoke there he outlined his general attitude toward organized labor, in more definite terms than on any other public occasion. He said:

Some things appear to be pretty well agreed upon: First, the right of both labor and capital to organize for a good purpose; second, the right on the part of labor to strike, to obtain redress of real grievances, and for a possible betterment of conditions; third, the right of an employer to reduce the wages of his employees, or to discharge them when the necessities of business require it; fourth, that a man has a right to work without belonging to an organization, and fifth, that belonging to a labor organization furnishes no just ground for the refusal of employment by the employer. . . . There must be in every dispute a fair ground of adjustment. Possibly one of the parties to a dispute may be absolutely right, and then it has to be settled, if settled properly, by the absolute surrender of the other, but generally speaking, the fair settlement of a dispute involves concessions by each of the contending parties. I think this is true in 90 per cent. of all industrial or trade disputes, and it would be infinitely better in each case if the just basis of settlement could be ascertained before the dispute reached its critical and injurious stage. While the technical right to strike or to lock out is admitted, yet both strikes and lockouts result in loss and harm and injury to both parties in interest, and not only to the parties themselves, but to the public at large. . . . What the world wants is peace, and this is true in the industrial world as in the world at large.

The great unsettled labor problem then, is how are the controversies between labor and capital to be avoided; how are they to be settled if they occur? . . .

I never hear that phrase, so almost universally used, "the conflict between capital and labor," without a shudder. It jars upon my sense of truth. It is like its twin phrase,

"the conflict between science and religion"—misleading. There is no real conflict or antagonism between capital and labor. Capital and labor are interdependent; their interests are mutual,—one cannot prosper without the other. With a fair understanding of their mutual relations each must prosper. If men could only see this, the world would get along; business would prosper, workingmen would be happier and more independent. Above all, it seems to me that it becomes necessary to recognize the changed relations which exist between employer and employed. When I was a boy there was scarcely a manufacturing establishment in the State of Connecticut which employed as many as fifty workmen; they were as a rule, small establishments, conducted by some man who had been an employee himself, and who, by thrift, economy, and fair dealing, had acquired a little capital with which he established a business, carried on under his personal supervision. He employed his workmen personally; he knew them intimately; he associated with them in their homes, and thus the employer and employed each recognized their mutual dependence and their mutual interests. But that time is all gone by. . . . Applied science, as it is sometimes called, has absolutely changed all the conditions of life and business. This is the age of organization—an organization possible only as the result of the application of these forces of nature to the methods of doing business. We look at the world and say that all things are changed. The old things have passed away, and all things have become new, but there are some things which do not change. The organization of great business concerns with millions of capital, and the employment of thousands upon thousands of organized laborers changed conditions so that the old have passed away, and all have become new, but it does not change principles; it does not change the just relations of man to man; it does not change the basis of just dealing between man and man; it does not change their mutual relationship, or their mutual

interest. It may obscure such interests and relationships, but they exist, because the only true basis of association of men is the recognition of the immutable, sacred principles of right and wrong. The good is eternal; it never changes, and every contention and every difference existing among men must be finally settled on the basis of triumph of right.

Mr. Platt stoutly opposed the Anti-Option bill in 1893,—a bill "defining options and futures, imposing special taxes on dealers therein, and requiring such dealers and persons engaged in selling certain products to obtain license." He not only believed the bill to be unconstitutional, but declared that the principle contended for by its advocates was the most dangerous principle to the Republic and to the States which within his experience in the Senate had ever been announced. "I believe," he said, in antagonizing the bill, "if the principle announced here is adopted and sustained by the Supreme Court that from that day we may date the decline and ruin of the Republic." The bill was defended only upon two constitutional grounds, one that it might be passed under the taxing power of Congress, the other that it might be passed under the power to regulate commerce. To his mind there was not a shadow of reason to support either of these contentions. While by no means a strict constructionist of the Constitution, he denied that the right of taxation carried with it the right to destroy. "The power to lay taxes is limited by the inherent necessity of the case to the principle that the exaction must be a tax; and not a sweeping appropriation of the whole." There had been no question of such momentous consequence before Congress since the War of the Rebellion:

The deliberate announcement that Congress may de-

stroy individual property of any kind in any State and may prohibit individual business of any kind in any State is the most dangerous doctrine ever proclaimed in this chamber since it was announced that States had a right to secede from the Union and that the Government had no power to coerce them.

I beg Senators who think that in an incautious moment they have in some way become committed to the passage of this bill to stop and consider what they will be committed to if the bill passes. Can a Senator commit himself to the doctrine that Congress may destroy all individual property at will in every State of the Union, may prohibit all individual business at will in every State of the Union? For that is the meat and the essence of this bill.

As for the contention that a contract of sale might be regarded as interstate commerce, he declared that it did violence not only to the use of language but to the well-established idea of every lawyer, and that it was as broad and far-reaching in its consequences for injury as the claim that Congress might destroy everything which it had the right to tax:

It does not rest on the ground whether the business proposed to be prohibited is moral or immoral—there is no distinction as to the power of Congress with regard to such contracts—but it rests upon the broad ground that before the articles which are the subjects of the contract of sale have in any sense become subjects of interstate commerce the contracts themselves may be an injury to interstate commerce, and are therefore properly suppressed and made criminal.

If that be true, there is no contract of sale which can be imagined in this broad land which cannot be made criminal. I care not whether it is a gambling contract or a legitimate contract; I care not whether it is made on the board of trade or in the store of the wholesale or retail merchant or

in the home of the citizen; I care not whether it is a contract for immediate delivery or for future delivery, if the power exists as claimed, every business contract can be made criminal, if only Congress can be impelled by outside clamor and by demagogism to declare it illegal, and the further contention is correct, that Congress having declared the fact, it cannot be questioned. It is a dangerous doctrine. It will be like that class of "instructions which return to plague the inventor" if it be adopted. . . .

I am surprised and appalled that it should be thought possible that Senators can deliberately vote to give the Congress of the United States power, under either of these clauses, to cut up root and branch all business in the States, to destroy at its own sweet will all individual property in the United States. The advocates of the single tax theory will find here an easy way to the accomplishment of their ultimate purpose, that all the lands shall be gathered, as it were, into the treasury of the general government and be owned by it; the advocates of taking control of all corporate agencies in the United States will find here an easy and smooth path by which their ends may be accomplished when they make Senators fear that to vote against such a measure is to lose their party support.

Before speaking against the bill he had received a dispatch from the convention of Connecticut farmers requesting the Connecticut Senators to support the measure by their vote and influence, referring to which he said:

I respect the farmers of the State of Connecticut. I respect them too much to believe that they expect me to vote for a measure which I believe to be in violation of the Constitution of the United States, in subversion of the rights of the State, and for a principle which, if carried out to its logical conclusion, will leave us without self-governing States. . . . When any considerable body of men in

my State desire me to vote for a measure, it is my duty to carefully consider that measure so that I may not come hastily to a conclusion in opposition to it; but I trust that there has been given me courage, if I believe a bill to be unconstitutional or an unlawful or illegitimate exercise of the constitutional powers of Congress, to vote against it even if every member of every class in my State requested me to vote for it; and I have confidence enough in my constituents to believe that they would respect my judgment and honor my conclusion.

The practical results so far as the farmers were concerned he did not discuss at great length, because in his mind the question of whether the Constitution should be observed far transcended the question of whether the farmers of the United States were to get two or three cents a bushel more for their wheat or a cent or two a pound more for their cotton. But he was Chairman of the Sub-Committee of the Judiciary Committee which took testimony in reference to the bill, and nothing in the testimony had convinced him that the farmers would derive the slightest benefit from its passage. He did not believe that the average price for a year of wheat or cotton was a cent lower or a cent higher by reason of dealings in options and futures:

But who is to fix the price of the productions of the farmers if this bill passes? Have they thought of that? Do they not understand, with the present power of concentration of capital, with the present haste to make riches, that the price will still be fixed by some one else, and not by themselves? Has it ever entered their minds that the price hereafter for those agricultural productions will be fixed in the matter of grain by the millers and the elevator men and the commission merchants, and in the case of cotton by the commission merchants? Do the farmers

expect that the price will be fixed by the millers and elevator men and the railroad and commission men any more to their advantage than they now suppose it to be fixed by the men who deal in future contracts?

Mr. President, it is not five years' time since the farmers of the West were almost on the point of open resistance, because their rights were not respected and because of the wrongs which they supposed were being inflicted upon them by the elevator men of the West. Pass this bill, and it will not be five years more before they will believe that the millers and the elevator men of the West are unconscionably making and fixing the price of their grain. How can it be otherwise with regard to all crops raised by the farmers of the United States, three fourths of which must be sold within ninety days from the time they are harvested? Who is to buy except the men who by the consolidation and aggregation of capital have the means of buying that immense quantity which is not required for immediate consumption? Do the farmers suppose that the millers and the elevator men will consult them as to what the price shall be? Do they suppose, when the millers and elevator men have stored their elevators and their warehouses full and have all they want, they will not say "we do not want to buy"? Then, with this immense quantity coming upon the market, how is the price to be fixed except to the disadvantage of the men who produce the crops?

Mr. President, I commend to the advocates of this bill the scriptural phrase: "They who take the sword shall perish by the sword." We have come to the parting of the ways. Shall we stand by what has been understood to be the uncontested principles of the Constitution, or shall we depart from them at the demand of the anarchistic, the socialistic, and the populistic agitators of the country.

I firmly believe that the passage of this bill will open up a highway along which every constitutional heresy can make progress, along which the cohorts of social disorder and fanaticism may march to the ruin of the Republic.

CHAPTER XXXIII

REGULATION OF CORPORATIONS

Favors Reasonable Control—Opposes Sherman Anti-Trust Bill—In Sympathy with Roosevelt's Plans—Against Littlefield Bill in 1902—Opposes Income and Corporation Tax.

TO the indiscriminate assaults upon trusts and corporations which cut so large a figure in the politics of his time Mr. Platt was utterly opposed. That there were evils to be remedied he recognized, and he was not reluctant to acknowledge the necessity for judicious federal regulation, but the mad cry against organized capital, as if in itself it were an affront to public morals, rang harshly on his ear. To his mind no issue of morality was necessarily involved. The problem was strictly one of the practical advisability of insuring business competition by statute, and regulating by law the concentration of wealth, and it resolved itself into two simple questions: First, shall we by law, if we can, provide that competition shall be unlimited and unrestrained; second, shall we, if we can, limit the extent to which combination may proceed short of absolute monopoly? Within those bounds he thus formulated his own position:

I hold that a reasonable limitation of competition is wise, that a reasonable limitation of prices is wise, and that a reasonable control of production is wise.

Any interference by legislation with such orderly development of natural laws could result only in evil, yet the community owed to itself that in the process of natural expansion, business and capital should always have before their eyes the possibility of wholesome and effective restraint. The word "trust," he pointed out in the earlier days of the discussion, was used indiscriminately. If the original meaning were to be retained there were really no trusts in the United States. Aggregate capital was not necessarily a trust, even though it were large. Nothing was a trust except where different concerns which had been in competition pooled their issues and transferred all their property to a new company organized for the purpose of taking over their property so as practically to create a monopoly of the business in which they were engaged:

> If that condition of things ever comes about—the establishment of a monopoly in business, by whatever way it shall be brought about—that thing is harmful and prejudicial to the community. But consolidation without monopoly is an evolution of present conditions, and you can no more stop it than you can stop the tides or the sunlight. It is a law, just as much as any other natural law.

He recalled the time, during his youth and early manhood, when no man's social, moral, or business circle was more than a few miles in extent, and all competition was of necessity within that limited circle. But there came into the world certain new agents, steam and electricity, the result of which was to widen and broaden the field of activity, until it had come about that instead of a little community circumscribed by a horizon fifty or one hundred miles away, it was coextensive with the globe. It was as utterly impossible

to transact business in these days on the old principles, as it was to go back to the stage-coach. Whether the change from old conditions to new was merely a passing phase or not, we could not help it. We had talked about railroad consolidation, but the country would not go back to the little railroads of earlier days, each with its line of one hundred miles or so, each with its own rates and its own idea of business. As railroad consolidation had come to stay, and must be subject to regulations to prevent unnecessary damage to the community, so the consolidation of capital had come to stay and must be regulated. He was mindful of the fact that we were not the first to consolidate capital and great concerns in a business way. England, France, and Germany were quick to catch the idea that the field of business operations had been extending:

Whereas, a few years ago, if a man in Germany wanted to buy anything in London, he had to sit down and write a letter to go by slow post, a week to go there, another to get an answer, and three or four weeks before the goods could be delivered, he can now sit down in an office and telegraph and do it all in a day. Business has to accommodate itself to these conditions. If a man in Chicago wants to buy a cargo in New York, or sell a cargo there, he does not send a letter to go by post—he goes to his telephone: "How much will you give me for a cargo of wheat?" "So much." "I will sell it to you to-morrow and transfer the money for it." It involves the necessity for greater capital, and the people in England, Germany, and France were the first to find it out. If we did not do it we would have to withdraw from the race and lag behind in the business procession of the world. The thing has come to stay; it is a necessity, and all this has worked for the benefit of

the community, so that when we get through this transition period, every one will be better off for it.

At the same time steps must be taken to regulate and control:

The remedy is not to kill great establishments carrying on this business, whether they be corporations, partnerships, or individuals, or to kill the business. If there are any evils, they are such as grow out of the transaction of business anywhere, whether by individuals or partnerships or corporations. A corporation, no matter how much its capital, which simply tries to take advantage of all economies to cheapen the process of production and distribution, tries to get only a fair profit and reasonable, is a blessing to the community, I do not care if its capital is one hundred millions or one hundred billions. The difficulty is that we cannot always trust property to do those things in a way which the judgment of mankind says is right and fair. The problem is how to control them; how to keep people honest; how to keep corporations right and fair and honest in their dealings, and that subject is a great one. It does not do to go about denouncing trusts—some one must present some plan, either national or state, which, without destroying or crippling business, and thereby endangering the country, will keep them along the path of honesty. It is useless to say that this is a political issue, or can be made a political issue in a campaign, until some one thinks he has discovered that which is very hard to discover, a proper method of regulation without injury. When some man discovers that, and proposes to do this or that thing, then the people will look at that, and there may be an honest political issue raised, whether the proposed plan will accomplish the purpose to regulate without a greater damage—a damage which more than compensates for the benefit proposed. The question of how trusts are to be dealt with is one to be thought out, not by demagogues, but by honest men.

Such were his views on the subject of trusts as they were set down in 1899, when the issue was especially alive, and such they remained in substance to the end.

When John Sherman brought in his Anti-Trust bill from the Senate Finance Committee, in the winter of 1890, Mr. Platt urged that the measure be referred to the Judiciary Committee for further consideration and amendment. He felt that in its existing form it was hasty and ill-considered legislation, and that, if a measure of such far-reaching importance was to be enacted, it should be the ripest product of the mature judgment of the best lawyers of the Senate. He believed the bill as it stood to be contrary to public policy, and of questionable constitutionality. When he was asked by Senator Washburn of Minnesota, "if any special harm would come to the country or anybody else by the passage of the bill if it should afterwards be held to be unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of the United States," he replied:

> Whenever Congress passes a bill which the concurrent sentiment of Congress believes to be unconstitutional, it does a greater damage to the people of this country than is well to be calculated.

Pitted against the most influential leaders of his own party in the Senate—against what at the moment seemed to be a majority of the Senate—he unfalteringly made plain his opposition to the bill in the form then held. When the vote on the question of reference finally came, he was one of eight Republicans who joined the Democratic minority, carrying the motion to refer by the narrow margin of 31 to 28. When the bill came back from the Judiciary Committee in its modified form, he voted for it, as did every other

Senator recorded, with a single exception, although it did not, even in its revised form, command his approbation. Speaking of the bill, while still in its imperfect stage, he attacked, not only the merits of the measure, but also the methods adopted by Mr. Sherman as Chairman of the Finance Committee, to force it through the Senate. Sherman never forgave him for the criticisms he offered on the floor; yet time has fully vindicated his course.

While the bill was still in its ill-considered form he argued against it with a directness, force, and courage not excelled during all the years of controversy and agitation which followed in the wake of its enactment. In the course of the debate he said:

I do not like to vote against this bill. I believe that there are combinations in this country which are criminal, but I believe that every man in business—I do not care whether he is a farmer, a laborer, a miner, a sailor, a manufacturer, a merchant—has a right, a legal and a moral right, to obtain a fair profit upon his business and his work; and if he is driven by fierce competition to a spot where his business is unremunerative, I believe it is his right to combine for the purpose of raising prices until they shall be fair and remunerative. This bill makes no distinction. It says that every combination which has the effect in any way to advance prices is illegal and void. The Senator from Ohio in the first speech which he made here admitted that there were combinations in which there was no wrong, and yet he levelled his bill at them equally with the combinations which are doing wrong. . . . Whenever the price of anything is below what it costs to produce it, it ought to be raised, and any combination for the purpose of raising it to a point where the price is fair and reasonable ought not to be condemned; it ought to be encouraged. It will not do, because a few concerns

in this country are attempting to put prices where they are unreasonable, to enrich themselves beyond a fair compensation or equivalent for their capital, their skill, and their enterprise—it will not do to cast out your drag-net and bring within the condemnation of your law all the legitimate business enterprises of the country that are struggling along and trying to obtain only fair and reasonable prices for their goods, and who are giving life to labor, and peace and plenty to the whole land. . . .

The theory of this bill is that prices must never be advanced by any two or more persons, no matter how ruinously low they may be. That theory I denounce as utterly untenable, as immoral. . . .

I am ready to go to the people of the State of Connecticut; I have faith and confidence in them; and when I tell them that here is a bill which, under the guise of dealing with trusts, would strike a cruel blow at their entire industries, I know that they will see it and understand it; and if there be a people anywhere in this country who cannot understand it, it is better for a Senator to answer to his judgment and his conscience than it is to answer to their misapprehensions.

I am sorry, Mr. President, that we have not had a bill which had been carefully prepared, which had been thoughtfully prepared, which had been honestly prepared to meet the object which we all desire to meet. The conduct of this Senate for the past three days—and I make no personal allusions—has not been in the line of the honest preparation of a bill to prohibit and punish trusts. It has been in the line of getting some bill with that title that we might go to the country with. The questions of whether a bill would be operative, of how it would operate, or whether it was within the power of Congress to enact it, have been whistled down the wind in this Senate as idle talk, and the whole effort has been to get some bill headed: "A Bill to Punish Trusts" with which to go to the country. . . . We should legislate better than that. Every effort

to refer this bill to any committee that would give it careful and honest consideration has been voted down in this Senate, and it is better to vote the bill down than it is to go to the people with a measure which shall resemble the apples which grew in the region of that fated plain on which once stood the city of Sodom. We may make this bill look like a beautiful remedy; we may call it a bill to punish trusts, but when you attempt to put it in operation it will be

> Like that Dead Sea fruit,
> All ashes to the taste;

or it will be found to be a blow struck at the legitimate industries of the country such as they will not recover from in years and years.

The regulation of trusts was one of the legacies of the McKinley administration, the responsibilities of which were assumed by President Roosevelt, and it was one of the first problems left unsolved at the time of McKinley's death with which his successor undertook to grapple. When Senator Platt met the new President at Farmington, a few weeks after the change of administration, they discussed the project which Mr. Roosevelt even then had in mind for the further regulation of combinations of capital. On returning home, the Senator examined the authorities with care, and on November 13, 1901, he wrote to the President as follows:

Since I saw you at Farmington, I have been reading up the cases decided by the Supreme Court, relating to the business of trust organizations, with the result that I am quite doubtful whether Congress can command the power to regulate interstate commerce, going so far as to force corporations doing an interstate business to make reports to United States officials. It seems to me that the Supreme Court confines the power of regulation to the courts alone,

and holds that jurisdiction does not attach to the commerce until the articles of commerce are delivered to the common carrier for transportation to another State. The court will have to go further than it has gone yet, to hold that the power to regulate commerce includes also the right to regulate the corporation, and the language of the opinions seems to me to indicate that it had decided otherwise. The court might possibly hold that a statute of that sort, if passed by Congress, would raise a political, and not a judicial question, and get around it in that way.

I write this because I very much desire the enactment of such legislation, if it would be constitutional, and yet I would not wish you to recommend specific legislation, which, if enacted, would be declared unconstitutional by the courts. I do not go so far as to say that in my judgment, the court would so hold, but I fear it would. It is a question that requires careful study—more careful than I have yet been able to give to it.

The closing sentence of this letter was strikingly characteristic of the man. He never felt that he had given sufficient thought or enough careful study to any subject, even though he had penetrated to the depths. He still wished for more time and felt that he had not exhausted all sources of information. It was a quality which stood the Roosevelt administration in good stead, for during three years of strenuous battling with economic problems the President found the Connecticut Senator constantly at his shoulder dispensing sane encouragement derived from faithful thought. With the President's determination faithfully to enforce existing laws he was in complete accord; but not so with the proposal to adopt a constitutional amendment giving Congress greater power over corporations. He favored the creation of the Bureau of Cor-

porations in the Department of Commerce and Labor when that department was organized in 1903, and was glad to see $500,000 appropriated to insure the more vigorous prosecution of illegal combinations of capital, but he opposed more drastic anti-trust legislation during the same session of Congress. Mr. Littlefield of Maine had handled in the House a bill requiring corporations engaged in interstate commerce to make returns, prohibiting rebates and discriminations, and the use of interstate commerce to destroy competition. It embodied about everything in the way of anti-trust regulation which had ever been demanded, and when it came to a vote, Democrats and Republicans, indiscriminately, scrambled to get their names written right in the record so that it passed unanimously, only six representatives expressing dissent by answering "present" when their names were called. When the bill reached the Senate the Judiciary Committee directed a favorable report. Mr. Hoar as Chairman presented it. No sooner had Mr. Hoar concluded than Mr. Platt was on his feet. "I rise to say for myself that as a member of the Judiciary Committee I cannot concur in the report which has just been made." He observed:

> Of course this is not the time or place to give reasons for my dissent, but briefly they may be stated thus: A large proportion of the bill, that which came over from the House, I think has been more wisely and appropriately treated in legislation which has been already enacted at this session; and as to the new matter proposed by amendments, I think there are unconstitutional provisions in them, and that if they were within the constitutional authority of Congress, they are mischievous and would work great injury to the business of the United States.

Nothing more was heard of the bill in the Senate; conservative counsels prevailed, and a measure which had been regarded with political favor slept on the calendar till the Congress came to an end. Thus he held an even course, discouraging extravagance of legislation on the one hand while on the other urging a wise restraint of capital and the maintenance of law.

He did not hesitate to impress his convictions upon those of his acquaintance who were allied to great corporations. To one of them he wrote in the last month of his life:

> All this railroad and corporation business by which the country is drained of its money to build up enterprises upon a capitalization of two or three times the actual value of the property is what is running us to the devil at railroad speed, and whenever Congress gets an opportunity to put its foot on it, it ought to do it.

Shortly after the election in 1904 he wrote:

> I do not believe that any very radical things are going to be done this winter, either in Congress or at the White House, but I shall probably know better by and by. I myself feel that the beef trust ought to be pursued, and I think that the tobacco trust needs a little anti-trust medicine; still, that there is going to be a general drive at corporations, I think very improbable.

The cry against political contributions from corporations was loud in the closing days of the campaign of 1904, but he could see no special reason why it should be heeded. Writing a few days after the election to William E. Chandler, who had been impressing upon him the importance of prohibiting such contributions he said:

I do not quite share your feeling that we have got to stop political contributions from corporations. I do not believe in a great campaign fund. I was glad that we were not going to have a large one this year. I think the fault lies in the magnitude of the money which has heretofore been raised for campaign purposes, rather than in the fact that corporations may have contributed. "Corporation" is a very elastic word. I presume the Concord *Monitor* is a corporation—at any rate, almost every newspaper in the country is now, and I know of no reason why the ordinary corporations should not assist in the raising of a reasonable campaign fund. You certainly cannot draw the line between a corporation, as such, and individuals who are members of it. The thing to do in my judgment, is to frown upon the raising of an excessive campaign fund.

In the consideration of the income tax provision of the Wilson–Gorman Tariff bill Senator Platt had a further opportunity to demonstrate his fair-mindedness with progressiveness and conservatism combined. While he opposed the income tax as then proposed, he did not declare his opposition to the principle involved, but in debating the question he took occasion to express his opinion on the advisability of imposing such a tax on corporations. In a speech delivered on June 22, 1894, he declared that his objections to the tax as proposed, were twofold.

First, that it was unnecessary for the purpose of raising sufficient revenue and was resorted to as a means of breaking down the system of protective custom duties; and second, that its provisions were extremely faulty, inequitable, unjust, and, by their complication, difficult of execution. If it were a necessary tax and were justly and fairly constructed, he should not make any opposition to it. If the necessities

of the Government required the imposition of some tax to raise revenue over and beyond what might be raised from customs duties and duties upon tobacco and spirits, he should regard the income tax as the next best method of taxation, but it should not be resorted to when the necessities of the Government did not require it simply for the purpose of breaking down the protective system, or for the purpose of conciliating those who objected. He declared that the rights of property were just as sacred as the rights of life and liberty and that no country which had not a just regard for the right of private property could go on progressively as a republic:

I do not understand the prejudice against the accumulation of wealth. I can understand why it is that there should be a prejudice against people getting wealth by improper means. I can understand why it should be thought to be a great evil that people should be able in a country to acquire large fortunes by illegitimate methods, by methods which the common judgment of mankind does not approve; but how it is possible that there should be a prejudice against any man, who by industry, enterprise, frugality, economy, and good judgment in investment has accumulated property, I cannot understand. I do not believe there is any such real prejudice existing.

I believe that demagogues appeal to prejudice, appeal to a sentiment which is perhaps to be found in almost every human breast, when they appeal to people to take such action, political or legislative, as will in some way interfere with and cripple people who are better off than they are. There never can be an equal distribution of wealth. If there were to be an equal distribution of wealth, its holding would soon be unequal. The history of civilization shows that there never will be and there never can be any equal holding of wealth.

Even if the wild idea of having everything owned by the State could be adopted there would soon be found ways in which certain individuals would acquire substantially great wealth, while others would be in a state of comparative poverty. . . . This beautiful idea of everything in common and every one having just as much as any one else is impracticable in this world.

Now, I say nothing in defence of those who acquire fortunes improperly, and yet there seems to be a prevailing idea that because some people acquire fortunes improperly therefore the cry should be raised—"Down with every man who owns anything." All the ideas of the past, the acquisition of property and the accumulation of wealth by means which every one says is legitimate, which the common judgment of mankind approves, are to be thrown to the winds, and if any one has any money he is to be mulct in some way and his property taken away from him.

I have no sympathy with that kind of an idea, whether it comes from one party or another or from one section or another. The right of property lies at the foundation of government; the idea of the protection of property lies at the foundation of all governments. The Democratic party will make nothing by attempting to favor the wild notions about the inequality which exists in the country and the wild notions which seem to make it criminal almost for any one by industry, enterprise, earnestness, and good fortune to have acquired some property. . . .

Mr. President, a large portion of this inveighing against any one who has, by proper means, acquired some property comes, after all, from the passions of envy and covetousness. A farmer upon his farm in the West, having a hard time to get along, finding that his crops do not bring him enough to yield what he considers a fair return to enable him to live as he thinks he is entitled to live, draws his load of corn to town. He finds there a man who was a farmer, but has owned some lots where a city has grown up. He finds that his old time farmer friend, who was in

the same situation with himself financially, has sold out his city lots and has now become a nabob, a millionaire; and immediately he begins to be envious of his former associate. He is not willing that he should have the benefit of his fortunate situation and fortunate trade. He begins to think that in some way or other he snould have been the man to enjoy that fortune. Then he begins to envy the man who has acquired the fortune. . . .

Every one fixes his own standard of wealth, and then he wants to make that wealth within a twelvemonth, and live all the while during the twelvemonth as if he had it on hand on the first day of January. That is the foundation of this populistic sentiment in this country. It is not that they complain so much of the improper and unequal distribution of wealth as it is the feeling of jealousy that they have not been able to acquire as much wealth as they desire.

Mr. President, you cannot conduct a government successfully by giving way to that sort of feeling; and it is not statesmanlike to appeal to that sort of feeling.

But without regard to the merits of an income tax he asserted that there was no reason why the tax should apply to a corporation as a corporation. It was no part of any income scheme that had ever been put in operation or devised in the world, and he declared his opposition to it without qualification:

It is the sentiment that in some way or other the Legislature must get at the corporations, which accounts for the tax upon the incomes of corporations in this bill. It has been a remark made more than once in the Senate, and so publicly that I may refer to it during the consideration of this Tariff bill, that the persons trying to pass it desire to "get at the rich men" and that is why this tax is laid on corporations. They wish some way or other to get at corporations.

This taxing of corporations by an income tax has no precedent to sustain it. It has never been advocated by any political economists in any scheme of income taxation. There is no more reason why we should tax the income of a corporation because it is a corporation than why we should tax the income of a partnership because it is a partnership. The truth about this matter of corporations is just this: A corporation should be treated as an individual. If it behaves itself it should be respected; if it undertakes to do wrong it should be restrained. A corporation properly conducted, conducted on principles of equity and fair dealing, is a benefit to the country and our civilization. More than that, it is an indispensable agent of our civilization. Its advent marks progress. If it goes into unfair dealing, inequitable doings, then it is a disgrace and a shame. But that is true of the individual just as it is of the corporation. . . .

It will stop the development of my State to tax these corporations. No one is going hereafter to form a joint-stock corporation to carry on business if the net profits of that corporation are to have an income tax of two per cent. imposed upon them, when business carried on in another way is not required to pay a tax as a business, and when a partnership business is not taxed. We shall have no more of these most beneficent corporations scattered all over my State, the hum of whose wheels and of whose industry can be heard the moment you enter the State, as you pass through it, and until you leave it, no matter in what direction you may go. . . .

What should be the scheme of an income tax? It should be to tax the personal incomes of individuals which exceed the amount exempted, and in that way you get all the income of the country. But here you will observe that confusion is created by trying to tax the corporation. There is no necessity for it, because, if you put the income tax upon personal incomes, you reach all the earnings of the corporation in the hands of the individuals whose incomes exceed the exemption. . . .

If we must have an income tax, the honest, just, equitable way is to make a small exemption and tax whatever income the individual has above that exemption. By that way you reach everything and make everyone pay in proportion to what he is worth. The whole matter of going outside of it to reach corporations is founded on the idea—I had almost called it an insane idea—that because a business is conducted under an association which is called a corporation it deserves to be struck at by legislation.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE INTERSTATE COMMERCE LAW

The Initiatory Legislation of 1887—Opposes Anti-Pooling Clause —Position Justified by Events—Favors Elkins Bill—Opposed to Hasty Legislation in 1905.—"Too Great a Subject to Play with."

A CONSPICUOUS opportunity came to Senator Platt to demonstrate his conservatism, sound sense, and courage in matters affecting the transportation interests of the country at the time of the enactment of the Interstate Commerce law in 1887. In the preparation of this law he played a vitally important part, and to him in its effective features the final form of the law is due. He was the second member of the Select Committee on Interstate Commerce, and to his constructive ability and his capacity as a lawyer the Committee instinctively turned. The comprehensiveness of the work which he performed on this measure as on many others will never be known except to those few who watched him day by day and took note of the unobtrusive, modest, efficient way in which he grasped each problem as it arose.

There was one provision of the law which popular clamor finally forced upon Congress for which he could not stand. This was the so-called "anti-pooling clause." He opposed it in the Senate committee, in the Conference Committee, and finally in the Senate after the Senate conferrees had yielded to the demand of the

House. He also vigorously opposed the amendment to the "short-haul" clause which was proposed by the Conference Committee. The accuracy of his political foresight was never more clearly manifest than in his course at this time. He argued that to forbid pooling arrangements would necessarily compel railroads to consolidate. That is exactly what happened. He argued that the substitution in the short-haul clause of the words "the shorter being included within the longer distance" in place of the words "and from the same original point of departure or to the same point of arrival" would lead to confusion of interpretation by courts and commissions. That also happened. It is not too much to say that if the bill as originally favored by Senator Platt, without the amendments forced by the House upon the Conference Committee and the Senate, had become a law in 1887, the demoralizing railroad rate agitation of 1906 would never have taken place. Such moderation as Senator Platt advocated at the earlier time would have obviated the evils which President Roosevelt set out to correct twenty years later.[1]

[1] "As a member of the Senate committee Mr. Platt was indefatigable in his study of this difficult subject. His speeches in opposition to certain sections of the Interstate Commerce act which he believed to be ill-judged are without doubt the ablest presentation of the subject ever made by any man in the United States Congress. Had Mr. Platt's advice been taken at that time many of the difficulties under which we have suffered both financially and industrially in the matter of railroad policy would have been much mitigated."—Arthur T. Hadley, April, 1905.

"In the Interstate Commerce law of 1887 was included a prohibition of the pooling by competitive railway carriers of freight or the earnings of freights. That was right. The old money pool and freight pool was a harmful thing to commerce and a harmful thing to the railroads engaged in the commerce, but Senator Platt of Connecticut, a great statesman and one of the most faithful

On January 6th and 7th, when the conference report on the Interstate Commerce bill was before the Senate, Mr. Platt made his only elaborate speech in connection with the legislation. It was his habit not to argue with the Senate unless argument was necessary, but in this case he felt that there were things for him to say which could not be so effectively said by another:

I am in favor of legislation for the regulation of the business of the railroads of the country within the extreme limits of the Constitution which I understand to be for the regulation of that portion of the business done upon the railroads of the country which comes within the definition of "interstate commerce." I wish that it were so that Congress had power to go further in the subject of railroad legislation. . . .

The basis upon which we must legislate, as it seems to me, is simple. The justification for legislation is that the railroad business, unlike other business, is of a mixed nature. It is partly private business and partly public business. I think that we should refrain as far as possible from legislating to affect purely private business in this country. But when a private business is "charged with a public use," as the phrase is, when the railroad undertakes to discharge a public duty as well as to conduct its private business, it is eminently proper and necessary that there

men who ever served this country in the Senate at Washington, tried to the best of his ability to modify that proposition so as to permit railway corporations engaged in interstate commerce to make traffic contracts reasonable in their character, to be made public, and to be subject to abrogation by the commission whenever the public interest required it. I opposed that.

"But, gentlemen, Senator Platt was right, and I and those who were with me were wrong. Much of what is found to be objectionable in the situation of to-day would have been averted if the legislation in respect of which I speak had been enacted."—John C. Spooner, at the dinner of the N. Y. Chamber of Commerce, November 21, 1907.

should be legislation to make sure that the public business is conducted for the public welfare, that its public duty is faithfully discharged, and that no abuses are allowed to exist.

I said the basis of legislation was simple. It should be the enforcement of the common law—that, and nothing more. Congress may not justify itself, in my judgment, in stepping outside of the well-defined principles of the common law in legislation. Those principles affecting interstate railway business have had a growth of centuries. They provide the remedy for every difficulty which can arise in the operation of railroads. The application of those principles to every evil or abuse which can be charged against railroads and railroad operations will solve the difficulty and remedy the evil. The difficulty is only in the application.

So, then, I think we should confine our legislation to the enforcement of the common law. That is simple. It is only this; it can be expressed in a word: The rates charged by common carriers must be reasonable, and such carriers must charge only like rates for like services. That is all. It has been the intention of this committee to confine legislation within these limits. A careful study of the bill as it was passed by the Senate will show that we did not go outside of those limits, that we undertook to make no new law for the regulation of railroads and the business of railroads and interstate commerce in this country, but that we did undertake to hold the railroad management of this country up to the strict letter of the common law.

On the question of pooling he spoke with special emphasis for on this he felt deeply:

I challenge any man to show that the object or purpose or faithful observance of a pooling contract—by which I mean the apportionment of the competitive traffic, or of the earnings derived from such competitive traffic—can

be anything else except the maintenance of stable rates. It is supposed, I think, on the part of the public, that in some way these railroad pools fix unreasonable rates.

I challenge proof of it. I heard petitions presented at that desk this morning praying for the passage of this bill. For what purpose? To prevent excessive rates, discriminations, and pooling. It shows the utter and lamentable ignorance of what pooling contracts really are. There is not a man who ever studied them, there is not a man who ever investigated their operation, who will not tell you that the main purpose of them is to prevent discriminations; and yet here we have a bill in which we propose to make criminal the means which the railroad companies adopt to prevent discrimination. Others may agree to it for the sake of getting legislation. I will not.

It is rarely that any public man predicts with precision the effect of legislation which he favors or opposes, but in this instance the exceptional happened. Certain paragraphs of the speech which he entitled, "Shall Railroad Co-operation be Declared Criminal?" carried the genius of prophecy, because their inspiration came from simple common-sense:

I wish to emphasize this point: George Stephenson said that where combination was possible, competition was impossible; and no man ever said a truer thing. This bill leaves open and invites the worst kind of combination which this country may fear—that is, the combination and consolidation of railroad corporate capital. . . .

Why, Mr. President, the monopolies of this country are built on the graves of weak competitors, and this bill invites that grand monopoly of railroad capital in this country which will be built upon the graves of railroads that are not able to stand in the competition, which railroad monopoly will be the master of the people. I have not learned that such results are to be regarded with favor.

I can not unlearn all the teachings of my youth at the demand of these economists, these professors of political economy, these railroad men, and these socialists. I believe that it is better to keep business in a good many hands, if you can, than to concentrate it in a few hands. I believe it is better to let the little stores in the country live than to build up the great mercantile establishments at their expense. I believe it is better to let the little factories live than to build up the great manufacturing corporations at their expense. I believe it is better to let the weak railroads live in this country than it is to build up one gigantic railroad corporation which shall occupy to the railroad business of the country the same position which the Western Union Telegraph Company occupies to the telegraph business of the country.

I believe we are holding up a false standard to our young men. I believe that the "little farm well tilled" is better than many leagues of land in one ownership tilled by capitalists whose laborers come and go, and who have little sympathy with the proprietors; that a "little house well filled" is better than the marble palace with its interior decorations of gold, its hangings of silk, and artistic carpets from the marts of foreign nations, better in their tendency to the advancement of the prosperity of the nation and the welfare of the people. But this bill presents these alternatives.

Although he failed to secure legislation in exactly the form he sought, he was gratified to have been so largely instrumental in placing in the statutes an act embodying needed regulation of interstate railway traffic, and he supported subsequently such measures as were proposed to perfect the act, especially the Elkins Act of 1903, which met the evils of rebates. It was never possible to secure the passage of a pooling bill, though more than one attempt was made.

When President Roosevelt incorporated in his annual message of December, 1904, his recommendation of legislation still further to curb the railroads, he felt that a mistake had been made, not because he was opposed to additional restrictions, but because he feared the introduction of the subject just then at the beginning of a short term of Congress would lead to fruitless agitation and a public demand for legislation which could not be wisely considered in so brief a time. As to the policy of bringing the subject to the front at that particular moment he held a clearly defined opinion:

I am sorry that the President made the recommendation that he did—that is, in particular. It was very proper, of course, for him to call the attention of Congress to the subject, suggesting legislation calculated to remedy any defects or abuses that exist, and I do not think that he had really considered what the effect of giving to the Interstate Commerce Commission power to fix a rate which should go into operation at once, might be. I do not think he would now make just that recommendation, having had opportunity to study the matter more at length.

His foresight again was justified when in writing to a New Haven editor a week after the message had gone to Congress, he said:

I should not be surprised if this proposition to give to the Interstate Commerce Commission power to declare fixed rates unreasonable, and to fix what is called a reasonable rate, to stand until such action is reversed by the courts, so got possession of the public mind as to overshadow the tariff question entirely, and make people forget it.

The cry for immediate action by Congress went up from every corner of the United States, and the House

Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, with suspicious alacrity, reported a bill to satisfy the cry. Mr. Platt foresaw that the same popular pressure which had moved the House Committee to ill-considered action would be turned upon the Senate. His forebodings he expressed in a letter to S. C. Dunham of Hartford on February 2, 1905:

> This railway rate-making business has assumed the form of a craze, and I am told that the House of Representatives will pass the bill which has been reported from the Committee there, probably unanimously, which will throw it upon the Senate at a time in the session when it is utterly impossible to give the matter intelligent consideration, and then the Senate will be accused of acting in the interest of railroads and corporations and be made to bear the responsibility of what will be called "killing the bill." It is not a pleasant situation to contemplate. I do not know but that the craze may so affect the Senate that the bill may be hurried through the Senate without consideration. For one, I am willing to pass any proper and desirable legislation to remedy any evils or abuses in the matter of transportation, but I do not want to do foolish and indiscreet things.

His premonition in regard to the pressure which would be brought to bear upon the Senate was to have a closer verification even than he had imagined; for before the passage of the bill by the House he discovered in his own home newspaper, the Hartford *Courant*, an editorial summons to the Senate to push the legislation through. He wrote at once to the editor of the *Courant*, his friend, Charles Hopkins Clark:

> I clipped from the *Courant* an editorial paragraph which I enclose. It surprised me just a little, because I felt

sure that the *Courant*, at least, would not want the Senate to take hasty action on so important and complicated a subject as this legislation relative to the power of the Interstate Commerce Commission over railroad rates. I think it is quite safe to say that there are very few if any Senators who would not be glad to do the right thing about it, and do it at this session. There ought to be no Senator who would be willing to do an ill-considered thing at this or any other session.

Now, just see what the situation is. The House has had this matter under consideration the entire session until this time, when a bill is brought out of committee which neither the President nor the Committee is satisfied with, but it is a bill, and the House caucuses on it, and directs a rule to be brought in for its passage, denying the privilege of amendment, with three days for debate. Of course, the House is going to pass it and send it over to the Senate.

The Swayne case has been sent over, and whatever the opinion may be about that, it must be tried with all the formalities and detail that would be if it were an impeachment of Judge Lacomb of New York. The House fooled with that all the session and the managers are ready at last to go to trial on the tenth day of February, wanting until the thirteenth, which we refused to agree to. This leaves just 18 working days in which to try that case, with 67 witnesses summoned; to pass the appropriation bills, only one of which has become a law, two being in conference, leaving ten unconsidered, and several of them yet unpassed by the House, together with all the other legislation which ought to be attended to.

Now, do you think that we ought to just simply take that bill as it comes from the House and pass it without debate or consideration, or do you think that it would really be better to have the Committee consider this matter during the session, and get a bill that would be satisfactory to the President, to Congress, and fair to shippers,

railroads, and investors? Is it not too important a subject to be disposed of in the way the House has disposed of it, and in the way the Senate will be obliged to dispose of it, if it is passed at this session?

Writing again to Mr. Clark on February 13th, after the passage of the bill by the House, he said:

The Senate does not balk; it simply wants to do the right thing. I venture to say that while there were only seventeen men in the House who voted against the so-called Rate bill, there were not seventeen men in the House of Representatives who were satisfied with it, and that the President himself is not satisfied with it. I can not reconcile it with my sense of duty, to pass a bill that everyone believes to be an imperfect method, at least, of effecting an object all practically desire to further, just because there is a sentiment that something should be done—a sentiment with which I agree fully. I cannot legislate in that way. I must try to get things right before I support them—at any rate, from my standpoint, and in a matter of this tremendous importance, to simply pass that bill without discussion or consideration would be, to my mind, a serious neglect of my duty as a Senator. If I did it, the people ought to ask me to come home. I think everyone understands that there is no opportunity to consider the bill—to amend it, or even discuss it. You do not want bills passed in that way in the Connecticut Legislature.

I cannot help what people think about the Senate. The Senate is here to do its duty, and not to be swept off its feet by what people may think about it. This is too great a subject to play with, by which I mean that no man who respects himself and tries to do his duty, ought to vote for any measure in which he does not believe, or which does not satisfy him, because of public clamor directed toward him personally, or the Senate of which he is a member.

This is the way I would talk to you if we were together

discussing the matter, and I believe that I could convince you that time ought to be given in the Senate to the consideration of this measure, and sufficient time to make it what it should be rather than what it is.

He was saved the dreaded ordeal of passing upon the bill during that session of the Senate, and when the question again came before Congress his voice was silent forever. What would have been his course regarding the legislation of the following winter can only be conjectured. The sole intimation of his trend of thought appears in a letter which he wrote in January to the president of one of the great railway systems of the United States:

There is great force in your suggestion as to additional legislation in the way of enlarging the powers of the Interstate Commerce Commission, and I think, on first impression, that it might be effectual. There seems to be a craze on this subject, especially in the West, and it looks as if some legislation would pass, not at this session—perhaps, at the next. The difficulty is to know what to do. I have been thinking about the matter, and have wondered how something like this would be, namely: Give to the Commission power to hear complaints, and if they find that the rates complained of are unreasonable, to suggest what, in their judgment, would be reasonable rates in the case before them. The suggested rate, however, not to take effect until upon an appeal, taken by the railroad company to the Circuit Court in the circuit where the rate complained of is, and the decision of that Court that the rate is unreasonable, and that the suggested rate of the Commission is a reasonable one,—upon such decision of the Court, the rate to take effect, such cases to be expedited by the Court as rapidly as practicable. Appeal to the Court of Appeals to be final unless certified to the Supreme Court of Errors.

This is merely a crude suggestion, but it would do away

with rate-making by the Commission, and would give the railroads an opportunity to get into court for final decision; would do away with the proposed transportation court; would not provide for additional judges; proceeds upon the idea that such cases might be speedily heard by the present courts.

Another suggestion is, that when the Commission might have declared a rate to be unreasonable, and decided that another was reasonable, that rate should not go into force for—say thirty or sixty days,—meanwhile, the railroad having the right to appeal and to apply to the Appellate Court for a stay or suspension, to be granted by the Court if, on a showing, it seemed proper, during the trial of the appeal. But, all these things have got to be threshed out, and I hope that we may be able to prevent any radical and injurious action. No one knows, however.

CHAPTER XXXV

A ROBUST AMERICAN

Sturdily Assertive in International Affairs—The United States a World Power—Sustains Cleveland's Venezuelan Message—Arbitration with Great Britain—The Hague Treaties.

IN all that concerns our relations to other Powers Senator Platt was a robust American, not in the least a jingo—for his innate sense of dignity forbade it,—but one who believed to the core of his being that the United States had a great part to play among the nations, and that we should ever be prepared for whatever glory the future might have in store. His attitude with regard to our occupation of the Philippines was typical of his attitude in all our dealings with foreign nations. "We are not in the Philippines" he said "as the result of premeditation; we are there by the logic of imperative necessity." He felt that Dewey's guns sounded the call to national duty, awaking a great people to a sense of its obligation. We could never again feel that we had no interest in what was taking place in the world outside:

> There have always been great epochs in the world's history. I believe them to be the result of Divine Providence, and I cannot help thinking that when the necessities of the Spanish War compelled the United States to plant its flag on the shores of Manila Bay, the very greatest epoch in the world's history began.[1]

[1] *The Independent*, August 24, 1899.

He realized that in our relations to other nations the universal rule of nature applied. We could not remain stationary. We must go forward or retreat. In our history we had never yet known what it was permanently to retreat; "it is our glory to have advanced, and whenever we have advanced it has been to the great and lasting benefit of mankind." He never conceived that our true policy was one of isolation. He had no obsession about the awful perils of foreign alliances.[1]

He held that to be a member of the family of nations conferred responsibility and created duties, that duty

[1] "Precisely how this notion of our supposed policy grew up it is perhaps difficult to explain. The sentences in Washington's Farewell Address, and in Jefferson's Inaugural Message with reference to alliances with European nations have doubtless been relied on as establishing such a policy for this Government. Neither of these utterances proclaimed the indifference of the United States as to what might take place in the world, or can be justly cited as authority for the doctrine that we should in no way take part in such affairs. Washington cautioned us to avoid 'permanent alliances.' Jefferson advised us to 'cultivate peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations—entangling alliances with none,' but this was very far from the assertion that we had no concern in what might be going on between the nations of the Old World, nor was it so understood even in those early days. It was permanent and entangling alliances which were to be feared and shunned, and there could never have been a purpose on the part of Washington or Jefferson to say that our interests were to be neglected, or that as one of the nations of the world we were to have no concern as to what other nations might do either in derogation of those interests or affecting the advancement and happiness of mankind.

"A nation has no right to live to itself alone. To assert such a right is to contend for the doctrine that selfishness is right. Selfishness in a nation is as much worse than selfishness in the individual as the nation is stronger and more influential than the individual."—Speech at the annual dinner of the New Haven Bar Association, Jan. 22, 1903.

corresponded with ability and power. When the United States was weak among nations its people felt that its duties were circumscribed by its boundaries. Upon the ground of incapacity our indifference might have been excusable. We had asked to be let alone, and we were let alone, so much so that we were scarcely recognized as one of the family of nations, but as we grew in strength and came to realize that we ought in all fairness to be consulted, the situation became galling: "I know of nothing in connection with our national affairs which stirred me more in my early life than the contemptuous indifference with which we were treated by the nations which considered themselves the Great Powers of the world," but:

Things change with lightning-like rapidity in the world; the time came when we realized that we had out-grown the clothes of childhood, and having arrived at full-grown manhood we should assume its duties. With growth came strength and the power as well as the inclination to discharge duty. The world did not know this—we did. While we had grown to have a giant's strength, the world still thought of and treated us as but a weakling. But opportunity came at last. The Powers had overlooked the fact that we had a navy, or, if they knew it, thought only that our ships were for show until one morning in 1898, as the daylight revealed the city of Manila and the shores of Manila Bay, Dewey's guns waked the world to a realization of the fact that the United States was thenceforth to be a power in the world, to be heeded and if necessary to be reckoned with. From that moment all was changed. From that hour we were not only invited to the family table of nations, but to take our seat at the head of the table, and, whether seated at the head or elsewhere about the board, there came true the old saying: "Where McGregor sits, there is the head of the table." We have thus come to

our own at last. We have found our true international position and it has been fully recognized.

We have seen how he approved the acquisition of Hawaii, and how he criticised the Cleveland administration for the restoration of Queen Lil to her comic throne. His feeling about the importance of our relations to the Sandwich Islands dated back to the time when the white inhabitants overthrew the native dynasty and appealed for annexation to the United States. "I think I understand the situation somewhat," he wrote in March, 1889:

> It is perfectly evident even to an inexperienced observer that England is trying to obtain supremacy in the Sandwich Islands, France in Hayti, and Germany in Samoa; each of these three points being places in which it is essential that no foreign power should obtain influence superior to that of the United States. It does not require much prophetic vision to see that whatever diplomatic relations we are to have with England during the next four years will be complicated with the Sandwich Islands; and I can easily understand the wish of Mr. Blaine to have some one skilled in diplomacy and international law at the Sandwich Islands. I shall be surprised if the next four years does not develop a situation which will call for the exercise of the highest talent and the soundest judgment on the part of whoever may be Minister at that place.[1]

In December, 1895, President Cleveland stirred the country with his Venezuelan message asking Congress to authorize a commission to determine the true divisional line between the republic of Venezuela and British Guiana. This challenge to Great Britain, with its sturdy Americanism and its demoralizing influence upon stocks, shocked the sensibilities of some of Mr.

[1] Letter to M. M. Gower, March 26, 1889.

Cleveland's former idolaters, but it commanded the endorsement of many of his political adversaries. Mr. Platt, although opposed to Cleveland at almost every point of public policy, advocated the speediest possible action on the bill carrying the necessary authorization. He opposed any amendment of the bill which had already passed the House:

> The question arises whether Great Britain is attempting unfairly to extend her sovereignty and authority in Venezuela. The message of the President states the policy of the American people on this subject very clearly and very vigorously. . . . Any amendment made in the Senate will be construed in England as a hesitation on the part of the Senate to sustain the President in the position he has taken. . . . The bill now contains all that the President of the United States asks of us. And it is the President of the United States who asks this of Congress. It is not as an individual who occupies the executive chair that he has addressed us, but he speaks in the official capacity as the President of the country, and in this matter what he says should be treated as the utterance of the President of the United States.

"With regard to Venezuela, I did the only thing possible," he wrote while the affair was still fresh in the public mind, "which was to favor the appointment of the commission, and though my action was not quite popular, I think the country is beginning to see that the commission was the only way out of the difficulty."[1]

And on the heels of the President's warlike message he wrote to former Congressman John R. Buck of Hartford:

[1] Letter to George L. Cheney, March 14, 1895.

I got your letter of the first or second instant and I send you to-day the message and correspondence between Olney and Lord Salisbury and also a record containing Mr. Lodge's speech. I hope you will read it carefully. I am rather surprised to know that you could flay Olney, for I think his dispatch to Lord Salisbury is a pretty temperate statement of the case. I do not know whether we disagree radically or in non-essentials. I object to England or any other foreign power getting a foothold on the western continent or, if already here, extending its possessions here. I think the United States ought to interfere whenever either is attempted. Do you hold that it is nothing to the United States, that we ought not to object to colonization by foreign powers or the unjust and ruthless extension of foreign colonial institutions here? If so, we disagree radically; if not, it is only a question of propriety and of making our position known. But this is getting to be ancient history here and few suppose that in the Venezuelan matter such a case of wilful aggression is to be made out as to require the interference of the United States upon the principles I have laid down.

Thus believing that his country was to be a constant factor in great world problems; that our destiny decreed our territorial growth; that the Monroe Doctrine was a practical, working theory, he consistently upheld all measures needed to equip us for the important part in the international drama which we were bound to play. He supported appropriations for an adequate navy, and sustained the McKinley and Roosevelt administrations in their plans for an efficient army. He was not niggardly when it came to maintaining our representatives abroad in a style befitting a first-class Power. He was one to whom every President could look for support in policies intended to insure the dignity of the United States among the nations,

for his first impulse always was to sustain any Executive engaged in upholding the American side of an international argument. In the last days of the Cleveland administration an arbitration treaty with Great Britain was negotiated. He was for ratifying it, if a way could properly be found to do so, yet he would not act hastily; for there were questions which the Senate as a part of the treaty-making power might well consider with great care. "I cannot think" he said to one who urged speedy action after the treaty had gone to the Senate, "that there are any political considerations, speaking in the sense of partisan politics, which affect the ratification of the arbitration treaty":

It is a great treaty, it is to be far-reaching in its results, and it should be carefully considered, and I think that is the disposition with which it has been received. I do not know of any opposition to the principle of arbitration. There are some questions which arise as to what subjects will necessarily, under the consideration of the treaty, be submitted to arbitration, and I think you will agree that there should be very careful examination to determine that. So far as I am at present advised, I don't see serious objection to the form and language. I am a little surprised at the ambiguity of some of the expressions.

Striving with all his might to reach a conclusion, the righteousness of which the future would sustain, it was no wonder if he lost patience with the self-constituted custodians of the general welfare who tormented him and other Senators with importunate demands for immediate compliance with the Executive will. To one of these he wrote:

I beg to assure you that if the public believes what you say it does believe with reference to the motives of Sena-

tors with regard to the arbitration treaty it, in my judgment, believes in what is not true and which there is no reason to believe is true. If the people will attribute improper and unworthy motives to Senators it is unfortunate, but probably cannot be helped. The principle of arbitration upon which the treaty is founded is as dear, I think, to us as I think it is to you. That there are serious difficulties in the way of this particular treaty is not to be disguised. I presume that when a vote is reached the moral considerations will prevail in my mind and lead me to vote for the treaty as it is, but I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that it is quite possible, and more than probable, that even within the next five years, to which it is limited, circumstances might arise and interests of the United States suffer in a way which would bring more condemnation to us than we are now receiving because we are not acting in haste. Let me suggest to you whether it would not be well to consider that Senators are quite likely after all to act from honest motives and under a sense of great responsibility.

One of the reasons which made him pause was a deep-seated distrust of England's intentions, and this feeling he expressed in a reply to an inquiry addressed to him by the editors of the *Outlook* as to the necessity for the Senate's delay:

Take the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, now fifty years old, the reasons for which, owing to changed conditions, are practically at an end, which Mr. Frelinghuysen notified England we were no longer bound to observe, but which Mr. Blaine subsequently acknowledged. It is now insisted on, we believe, on the part of England to prevent the American Government from either building the Nicaragua Canal or assisting an American company to build it. The pretences of England to territory as recognized by that treaty have been persistently and greatly enlarged. We believe,

whether rightly or not, that English diplomacy is constantly exerted to prevent the building of the canal. All this is done in a way very difficult to detect, and the evidence of which is indirect, the results furnishing the best indication of her intrigue. Now in a matter as important as this is, is it wise to submit a "difference" which England may claim to arbitration? Why is it wise to submit to arbitration every possible claim which England may make with regard to the extensions of her territory in this hemisphere, when for more than fifty years we have been denying as a matter of national policy her right to make any extension whatever? The truth is, and we may as well look it in the face, that England is a preposterous claimant everywhere in the world, going just as far with her claims for territorial extensions and commercial aggrandizement as she dare to go without encountering forcible opposition. Her diplomatic history has been one of continual aggression, both in this country and everywhere else. Is it not fair to suppose that when once it is provided that all "differences" shall be submitted to arbitration, her claims will be indefinitely "enlarged"? When she no longer feels they are to be resisted, those who have been careful students of her policy cannot but anticipate that new claims very aggravating in their character will be put forth for the very purpose of being submitted to arbitration in the hope that through her great influence and, if the word does not shock you, chicanery, she may get some of her claims allowed. We have had a great many arbitrations with Great Britain. In every instance but one, that of the Geneva award, we have got the worst of it, and I think that since then she has more than wiped out by arbitrations the advantage that we gained by that award. We are a self-contained people unless the present or "jingo" sentiment is to prevail. We do not seek extension or aggrandizement. We shall never do so with the expectation of settling our claims by arbitration. All our knowledge of Great Britain leads us to suppose and to believe that she will. We think that

we can see many directions in which the moment this treaty is ratified she will begin to push claims which have lain comparatively dormant because she felt that the United States would not submit to their being pushed.

If you have ever lived in the country, you will remember in the town where you resided some man who was overreaching, known to be contentious, setting up preposterous claims with his neighbors, ready to assert them by physical methods or by lawsuits, ingenious in insisting upon shadowy and doubtful rights until he was really the terror of his neighbors. I don't think that the proposition of such a man to submit all "differences" which he might have with anyone for five years to arbitration would have been looked upon with the utmost favor. The people who knew him would be very suspicious of a multiplication of "differences," especially when it was quite doubtful as to whom the person selecting the arbitrators would desire to favor, or whether that person was far-sighted enough to foresee any bias which might exist in the minds of the deciding arbitrator whom he might select.

Such suggestions as these cannot but find a place in the minds of those who have been careful students and observers of the policy pursued by Great Britain. And having said this, I turn to the other side of the question and say, that probably the benefit established of the principle of a peaceable settlement of national differences will, in my mind, outweigh the objections which present themselves to me sufficiently to secure my vote for the treaty without amendment unless we can have a pretty good understanding that some amendments would be acceded to by Great Britain. But it is not a question which should be met and decided in blind haste. A Senator is just as responsible for this treaty as the President is, and must approach the question of its ratification in the same spirit as he would the question of its negotiation in the first instance, and proceed with the same deliberation. It is one of those questions where there ought to be no jumping at conclusions. And I want in

conclusion to say that I do not believe that this treaty is being considered by Senators from a partisan standpoint, but just from the standpoint of the President and Mr. Olney during the year which they have been trying to arrange its details and terms.

To another correspondent[1] with whom he had been in frank communication, he explained in a little different way, the considerations which influenced him in weighing carefully the provisions of the treaty:

I should probably let the benefits to be derived from the ratification of any treaty outweigh my fears, and should have voted for the treaty as a whole without amendment if that had been thought best by the Foreign Relations Committee. At the same time, we who know England and English policy cannot help having fears that some interests of the United States may be put in jeopardy by the treaty of arbitration, in a way and to an extent which would make those who are now most desirous that it should be ratified extremely serious. Even Mr. Edmunds, who has been a consistent and able advocate of the treaty, can only answer those fears by saying that the matters in which our interests would be likely to be endangered would not come within the jurisdiction of arbitration, and he may be right in respect to that, but jurisdiction would certainly be claimed with reference to matters growing out of or dependent upon the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, and if we deny jurisdiction and succeeded in preventing those matters from coming to arbitration, we should be put in the position of having, by technical plea, avoided the principle of the treaty.

During the Roosevelt administration the question of arbitration again came before the Senate—first through a treaty which Secretary Hay negotiated with

[1] Professor Waldo G. Pratt of the Hartford Theological Seminary.

Great Britain, and later through treaties supplemental to the Hague Convention of 1899, intended to render effective the provisions of that Convention dealing with "the permanent court of arbitration." In both instances the Senate was disposed to cling to its prerogatives as a constitutional part of the treaty-making power. As for the treaty with Great Britain, there was a serious question about the advisability of entering into a general arbitration agreement at a time when matters affecting the Isthmian Canal were likely to come up in which Great Britain might enter obnoxious claims. As in the case of the earlier treaty negotiated by Secretary Olney, Mr. Platt was for going slow. "Every time we come to a question of arbitration" he wrote in February, 1904, to Lynde Harrison of New Haven, a supporter of the treaty, "the matter seems to be one that we can not well arbitrate":

> For instance,—the anti-Panama people are now seriously proposing (and it is about all there is left of the anti-Panama sentiment) that we should enter into a treaty with Colombia to pay her some $10,000,000 upon the theory that she has a grievance, and that we ought to pay her for the sake of quiet and good feeling. Of course, this proposition rests upon the assumption that Colombia thinks that we have done something wrong. I would not like to submit to arbitration on any such question as that at the present stage of the Panama matter. True, it might be said that if Colombia has no real claim against us, we would not be hurt by agreeing that she might present whatever she had or thought she had, and have the question arbitrated, and yet, it seems unwise and unnecessary to submit a perfectly absurd contention to arbitration. I merely speak of this to show that there is all the time before the Senate some concrete proposition for arbitration which seems to be inadmissible.

The Hague treaties were held a long time in the Senate, a majority there contending that a general treaty could not properly be made giving to the Executive discretion in entering into agreements with foreign powers regarding certain matters in dispute, but that each separate agreement must be subject to ratification by the Senate. Mr. Platt during the session of 1904–5 was occupied with his duties as presiding officer of the Swayne impeachment case. He was ill much of the time and in no condition to undertake exacting tasks, yet he was concerned about the treaties and anxious if possible to come to the assistance of the administration. When the question came before the Senate as to accepting the amendment proposed by the Committee on Foreign Relations substituting the word "treaty" for the word "agreement," he voted with the small minority against the amendment, but made no record of the reasons for his vote. Realizing that the position of the administration ought to be fully stated, ill though he was, he felt impelled to prepare himself to argue the administration's case against the majority of his associates, and he dictated from his sick bed the following letter to Secretary Hay which he sent by a special messenger to the State Department to be placed in Mr. Hay's own hands:

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I would like to be able to take your side of the argument about the treaties, and am inclined that way, but I have a little touch of the grip. I get out long enough to go up to the Senate each day to preside at the impeachment trial, after which I come home and the rest of the time am in bed.

I write this to say that I think that inasmuch as the Committee on Foreign Relations proposes to make an

argument, according to the newspapers, sustaining the Committee's side of the question, it would be well if the Department of State could, in a way, furnish a brief, outlining its views. If I can come to the same conclusion that the Department of State does, I would like to argue it.

Putting the proposition into concrete form,—I understand that the Department of State claims that the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, may make a treaty binding upon our Government and the Senate alike, to submit a certain class of disputes which cannot be adjusted by diplomacy, to the Hague tribunal for arbitration, authorizing the President to determine whether a particular controversy which may arise falls within the class which, by the treaty, it is agreed shall be submitted to that tribunal, and to arrange the method and rules of submission; that the Senate denies this, holding that no question of difference can be submitted even after such a treaty has been made, except by a new treaty negotiated by the President and ratified by the Senate. In other words, that the United States, by reason of its Constitution, can not enter into a general arbitration treaty; that the most it can do is to *promise* that, if differences arise which can not be settled by diplomacy, it will *endeavor* to negotiate a treaty, which, if ratified by the Senate, will permit the particular difference to be submitted.

With this grip cold which I have, and all my other work, I cannot go to the bottom of this subject, either argumentatively or on precedent, but it looks as if it is going to reach a point where I must take a position in the matter, and I would like you to help me out if you can.

Yours truly,

O. H. Platt.

Honorable John Hay,
Secretary of State.

He seems not to have been quite satisfied with the pleadings on either side. With the Senate's contention

he had little sympathy. He thought the body to which he belonged was getting altogether too critical. "I would stand as stoutly as anyone against any encroachment upon the prerogatives of the Senate, or against any unlawful or unauthorized action by the Executive," he wrote Judge George Gray:

> But it does not do the Senate or the country any good to be continually looking to see if in some unimportant particular the Executive has not gone too far. I have known people so jealous of their own rights, and so fearful of interference therewith that they made their whole lives miserable, forfeiting the respect of everyone who knew them. I feel that the Senate is acting like such individuals.

At the same time he was unable to get from the administration a conclusive statement of its position, and one of the last letters he ever wrote on the subject was in the nature of an argument with himself[1]:

> I think that you understand that I voted against the amendment of the arbitration treaty, substituting the word "treaty" for the word "agreement." I do not think that the question has been intelligently stated yet, either by the President or by the Senate. It may be stated in this way:
>
> Can the President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, make a *general* arbitration treaty with another power, by which all disputes of a certain class arising hereafter shall be referred to the Hague tribunal, the President determining whether the particular matter arising falls within the class contemplated by the treaty, and how the necessary agreement in order to have the dispute properly presented to the Hague tribunal shall be made, as well as by whom, or, must the Senate be consulted and take part in the submission of every case which may here-

[1] Letter to S. E. Chaffee, Derby, Connecticut, February 21, 1905.

after arise, thus taking part in the determination whether the case falls within the class of controversies to be submitted to that tribunal. In other words, can the President and Senate now, in the exercise of the treaty-making power, provide that cases which afterwards arise of a certain class or nature, shall be submitted without further treaty agreement, to the tribunal?

It is a close question which would require a long time for me to argue, but I incline to the view that the President is right and the Senate wrong about the matter. There is no quarrel—no controversy. Either side of the question may be honestly taken, and is honestly taken. If the President is right, there may be a general arbitration treaty. If the Senate is right, there can not be, and every dispute arising must be the subject of a special treaty. It all hinges on the words of the Constitution, that "the President may, with the advice and consent of the Senate, make treaties."

His service came to an end with the question still pending, but there can be no doubt about what would have been his course.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE PANAMA AFFAIR

Always for the Canal—A New Republic on the Isthmus—Defender of the Administration—Speech of January 20–21, 1904—The "Yale Protest."

NO one in any way familiar with his record and character should have supposed that when it came to the point of deciding whether to build the Isthmian Canal he would be found temporizing or weaving fanciful objections to the only practical method of entering on the work; yet in the fruitful days of the fall of 1903, when the hour struck to end at last the years of weary waiting and Mr. Platt aligned himself by President Roosevelt's side, there were some who grieved for him as for a lost leader. The building of the canal had been a project close to his heart for many years. Almost his first official act in the Senate had been the introduction of a joint resolution inviting the co-operation of the nations of Europe in the selection of a route for the transit of ships across the Isthmus, and through all the intervening years he had never let himself be lured away from the real point at issue by futile discussion as to whether the canal should be built in one place or another. When, under the lead of Mark Hanna, Congress at last expressed its preference for the Panama route, he gladly gave his assent, and when a little later President Roosevelt, refusing longer to be

held in contempt by Colombia, made terms with the newly created state of Panama, he gave the administration his prompt and hearty support. It seemed to him the natural and logical sequence of events that, when Colombia undertook to hold up the United States in exacting an unreasonable price for its rights in the Isthmus, the people of Panama, who were most vitally interested in the construction of the canal, should throw off an authority which had long been odious and thus clear the way for beginning the work. It was equally natural that the United States should recognize the *de facto* government thus created. "I do not see how it was possible to do anything different than was done in the matter of the Panama revolution" he wrote shortly after the event:

We were under treaty obligations with New Granada, which obligations ran to Colombia after the government of New Granada was wiped out by revolution, and which of course now runs to Panama if it establishes its independence, to keep open the transit of the Panama railroad. Of course it is for our interest to have this done. It would really be our duty if there were no treaty requiring us to do it, consequently our action in that respect can not be criticised, I think. There is no evidence that our Government has done anything to encourage a revolution there—on the contrary, it is, I think, susceptible of proof that it has not—still, those who have been familiar with the situation have felt that it might occur and our Government has been watching the matter, ready to keep open the Panama railroad and protect the interests of American citizens there. There was a revolution, and I am sure we did nothing more than we ought to have done when it occurred. Then, the provisional government established appointed an agent to represent their interests, and our government received that agent, stating the facts and say-

ing that it appeared that there was a unanimous acquiescence on the part of the people of Panama to establish a government for themselves. This was not a formal recognition of the independence of the new government of Panama. We could scarcely refuse to listen to a man appointed as the representative of the inchoate government. The question of whether there will be a formal recognition of Panama as an independent government will come later, and if a government is established there, with a constitution, a president and legislature which seem able to maintain its existence, of course our whole policy in such matters would require the recognition of its independence. All we have done now, as it seems to me, is to recognize the fact that by a revolution there is a *de facto* government set up there. Whether the full recognition of this government will come must depend upon the future. The truth of the matter is, I suspect, that Colombia undertook to hold up the United States, demanding more money for the concession of canal rights than it should, and that Panama being aggrieved in that respect, desiring the canal and feeling that it had been unjustly treated, decided to sever its relations with the Colombian Government. Now, I am informed, the government of Colombia expresses its entire willingness to ratify the treaty, but it seems to be too late. If Panama succeeds in the establishment of a stable constitutional government, and sends a minister here, I see no grounds upon which he should be rejected. You spoke of haste, but after all, I do not see that any undue haste has been exercised. Revolutions in South American countries are hasty affairs anyway, and where we have interests we must find some one to deal with for the protection of those interests.[1]

Such a cry as went up from the throats of the vicegerents of the Almighty had not been heard in all the years since it was decided to retain the Philippines.

[1] Letter to W. F. Osborne, November 11, 1903.

President Roosevelt was assailed with a ferocity before which a weaker Executive might have quailed, and Senator Platt came in for his share of the vituperation. There was a little group in New Haven who deplored his course, but by whom owing to past relations he could be treated only with respect. Chief among them was Rev. Dr. Newman Smyth who early undertook a crusade against the Panama policy of the administration. He wrote to Mr. Platt asking for certain documents with which to fortify himself and added:

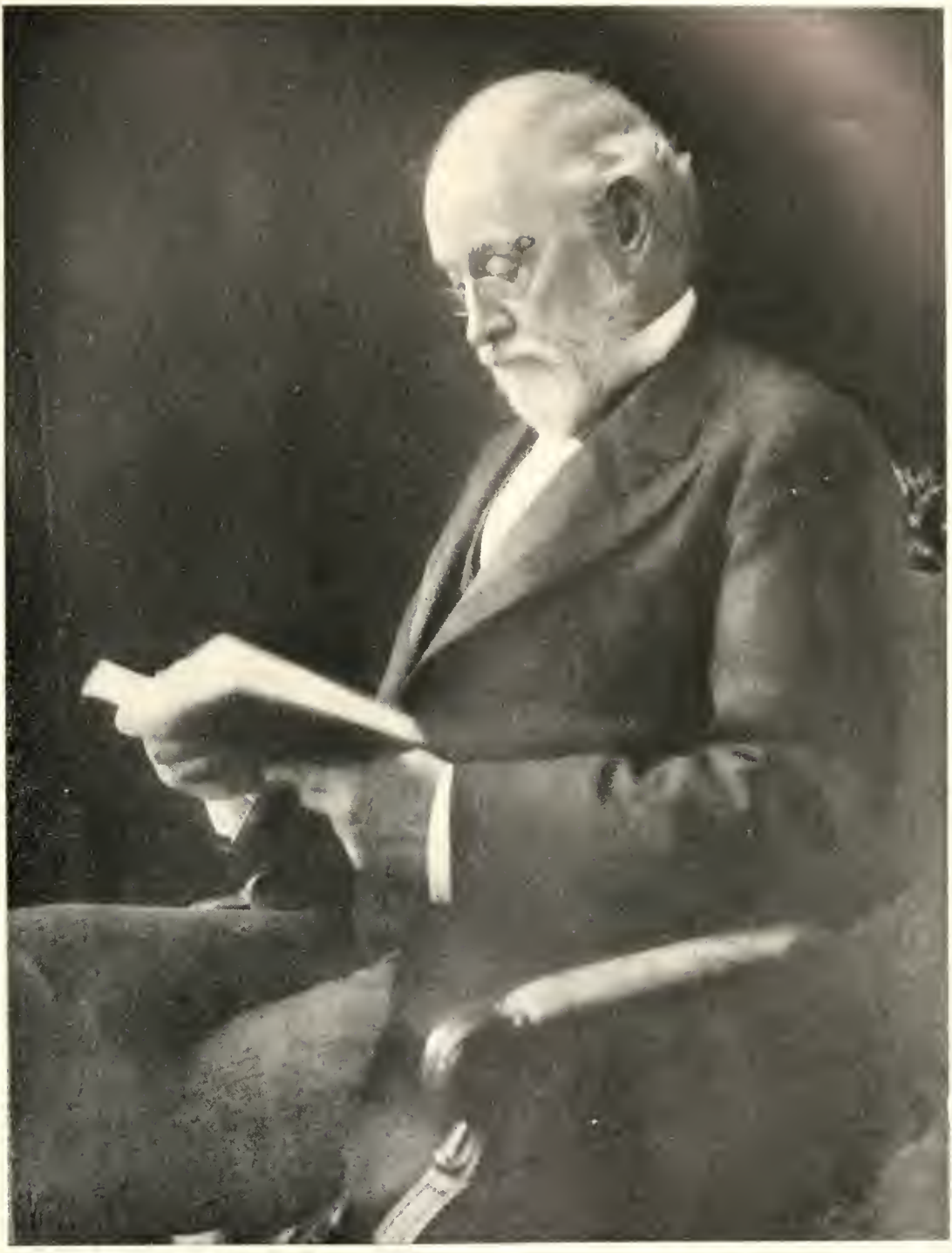
"I meet with little but an expression of amazement and reprobation concerning the high-handed action of the President."

Mr. Platt promptly sent the documents with the comment:

"So far as I know here the President's course meets with quite universal approval," and later he wrote:

> I may say that I do not agree with you at all in your views of the Panama situation. I think, if our Government had done anything different from what it did, there would have been a storm of indignation throughout the country and justly so.

After the treaty with Panama had been submitted to the Senate, the New Haven group prepared a petition praying for its rejection, and forwarded it to Senator Hoar. Because the names of a few Yale professors were signed to the petition it was styled the "Yale Protest," greatly to the disgust of other members of the Yale faculty who were anything but sympathetic with the move. Mr. Platt immediately was flooded with letters from New Haven disclaiming the right of the petitioners to speak for any except themselves. "In New Haven," wrote a prominent physician, "it



ORVILLE H. PLATT

is a laughing matter. There is n't a good Republican in the city who condemns the action in Panama." Some wanted him to ask the Senate to refuse to receive the petition. To these he replied that he doubted whether it was worth while for him to dignify it by any particular notice. To one he wrote:

Of course I would not consider the New Haven petition a matter requiring any notice on my part in the Senate or anywhere else. The Democrats in the Senate are by no means a unit against the treaty and the action of the President in recognizing the new state of Panama. The attack on the President is an attempt to force the building of the canal on the Nicaraguan route, rather than the expression of actual belief that he has done anything worthy of condemnation.

Judge W. K. Townsend, of the United States Circuit Court, a member of the Yale faculty of law was constrained to write him:

I wish I could convey to you some idea of the feeling in this community and among the Yale professors in regard to that Panama petition. Professor George P. Fisher, than whom no man here is more eminent for learning and ability called on me to deplore the false position in which Yale has been placed by this ill-timed, unjustified movement and the discourtesy to you. Professors Lounsbury and Day and Brewer have expressed themselves very forcibly on the subject. . . . Dr. Fisher agreed to write to Secretary Hay and I agreed to write to the President. But it has occurred to me that as there may be some legal complications growing out of the matter perhaps it is enough and better to say confidentially to you that I with other Yale professors, several of whom were approached and refused to be parties to any such performance, feel that President Roosevelt and you ought to know that we have implicit faith in his and your honor and

integrity and love of justice and in the wisdom and ability of his experienced counselors and that we are utterly opposed to said movement and to the spirit which prompted it.

As an offset to the "Yale Protest" a second petition was prepared and forwarded to Senator Platt praying for the ratification of the treaty. It was signed by representative business men of New Haven and by a large number of professors of Yale University, of at least equal standing with those whose signatures were affixed to the first paper. The member of the faculty who circulated the petition among his associates reported that those he approached expressed feelings of indignation or disgust as the case might be that the early petition was so conspicuously announced as voicing Yale sentiment. To him the Senator responded:

I cannot help thinking that the first petition stirred up more feeling in New Haven than anywhere else. I think it has fallen pretty flat here. I am sure Senators know quite well by reputation the gentlemen who signed it and regard them as professional critics. . . . The opponents of the President have lost ground in the Senate ever since their attack upon him. . . . Mr. Gorman has lost prestige and he and his followers have really descended now to the position of saying that they believe the President has not been honest, but has been guilty of duplicity and concealment. They can make no headway upon such a charge, and the longer they persist in it the less support they will have in the country.

He did not confine himself to thus making clear his position among his correspondents at home. On January 20, 1904, he began a speech in the Senate in support of the administration which occupied a part

of two days in delivery and which was a comprehensive defence of all that had been done.

The debate turned not upon the ratification of the treaty with Panama, but upon a resolution introduced by Mr. Gorman, "calling upon the President for certain information touching former negotiations of the United States with the government of New Granada or Colombia," thus throwing into the open Senate arguments which otherwise must have been consigned to the quasi-secretiveness of executive sessions. Mr. Platt gave his unqualified approval to every act of the President in connection with the Panama affair. He denounced the course of the Democratic minority in assailing the President's honesty and good faith. He called attention to the fact, almost overlooked in the discussion, that a new nation had been established as capable of dealing with the other nations of the world as Great Britain, Germany, France, or Russia. If we had violated the principles of international law in the recognition of that state, and thereby assisted it to take its place among the nations of the world, then at least twenty other governments of the world had violated all the canons of international law:

> It is a fact that the state called the "Republic of Panama" exists, and that we can enter into relations with it and it can enter into relations with us, and that nothing can change that fact or deprive that state of the power to enter into relations with us, or us to enter into relations with it except force, war, conquest.

That state had negotiated with the United States a treaty giving to the United States the right to construct a canal across its territory, and the ratification of that treaty without amendment would be the end

of the long weary controversy for the building of a canal.

He asked those who were opposed to the treaty what they were going to do with this fact and this condition:

> Will they vote against the ratification of the treaty because they think perhaps there was haste in its negotiation; because, against the word of the President of the United States they still think that in some way or other the President was in complicity with the revolution which created the state of Panama, . . . or for any of the other reasons which have been discussed here? Will they vote against the treaty except for the very reason avowed by the Senator from Colorado (Mr. Patterson) that he proposes to prevent if possible, the building of this canal across the Isthmus of Panama, so that it may be built across Nicaragua?

He denied that this Government had committed any act of war or had intervened as between Colombia and Panama. If it were not for the supposed necessities of political parties the claim would never have been made that this country had no right to protect the lives and property of American citizens on the Isthmus of Darien and to keep open the connection by rail over the Isthmus from ocean to ocean:

> I claim that we had that right independent of any treaty. Much more did we have it with a treaty, the Treaty of 1846. Further than that I claim if the treaty had not confirmed us in this right, we would have had that right under the conditions existing outside the treaty which have arisen with reference to inter-communication between the oceans across that Isthmus.

We knew, as everybody knew, that there was to be a revolution, and having had experience we knew more

—what revolutions on the Isthmus of Panama were—that they meant fighting without the observance of the rules of civilized war, that it meant death to Americans, that it meant the destruction of American property, that it meant the shutting up of the passageway over the Isthmus between the oceans:

> I say primarily, without any treaty and without any question of a canal, this Government was justified in sending a naval force there to protect our interests, and more than that to protect the interests of the whole world in that transit. It would have been recreant to its duty if it had not done it, and the outcry we now hear against the Government for having done it would be but an evening zephyr compared with the cyclone of denunciation that we would have heard from the other side of the chamber if it had not been done.

Except for the political necessities of the case the question never would have been raised. In former years the action of our marines on the Isthmus had prevented the people of Panama from accomplishing their independence:

> If as an incident, they were now enabled to secure their independence because we would not permit that transit to be interrupted, that was their good fortune, as it was the good fortune of Colombia that in previous years while protecting the Isthmus we had prevented the Panamanians from accomplishing their independence.

To those who were shocked by what they called the violation of the principles of international law, he directed the query: "How are the principles and canons of international law laid down?" and he answered his own question:

By the concensus of the powers of the world as to what is just and right and honorable as between nations, as the statute law determines what is just and right and honorable between individuals.

After eighteen or twenty nations had looked into the case and in recognizing the new republic of Panama had said such recognition was justifiable, right and moral, it did not lie in the mouths of Senators to say that any principle of international law had been violated. "If there was no precedent for it before, that precedent has now been written into the international law of the world":

It was a great act, Mr. President. It was an act which, for all time to come, must affect, and affect, I believe, most beneficially, the United States of America. The President was equal to the occasion. Brave and fearless as he is, but neither rash nor impetuous, he did the right thing at the right time; the thing which will insure the building of that canal, so long delayed; the thing which will contribute to the future prosperity of this country.

Mr. President, no great executive act of any President which contributed to the growth and glory of this country has ever been performed without a violent, vicious, vituperative attack upon the President who performed it. From the days of George Washington to the days of Theodore Roosevelt, whenever any President has had the courage to do what he ought to do in reference to foreign countries he has been assailed as the present Executive is assailed. The Jay treaty, the Louisiana purchase, the Florida purchase or settlement, the acquisition of the Philippines, all have called down upon the heads of the Presidents who have taken the responsibility and done those great acts the coarsest calumny, the most unsparing vituperation.

But, Mr. President, as time goes on and the benefits of

the act are discovered criticism fades away; the abuse is forgotten except as it is regretted; the act stands out to the glory of the President who performed it.

Mr. President, the hope of the nations, the dream of the ages, is about to be realized. We will ratify this treaty; we will build the canal; and when the ships of the whole earth, with their great cargoes, are passing through it, these criticisms, these attacks, these vituperations will be forgotten; and whatever President Roosevelt has done during this administration or may do in any future one, this act of his will stand forth before the world as the greatest act of his administration, the act which has conferred more benefit upon the United States and the world than any other act which he could be called upon to perform.

The response from home to this appeal was generous and inspiring. "In these times of great and difficult national questions," wrote a Yale professor, "it is necessary that there should be steady and clear heads in Congress and it is good to think that there are such," and similar expressions came from the leading men of the State, Democrats among the number. When Hoar presented the misnamed "Yale Protest," Platt followed immediately with the New Haven petition as a response.[1] The treaty was ratified, and the great work of canal construction was ready to begin.

[1] Mr. Platt's personal relations with the Yale Faculty were always cordial. In 1887 the University conferred upon him the degree of LL.D. At the Two Hundredth Anniversary Celebration in October, 1901, when he was an honored guest with President Roosevelt, Governor McLean, Marquise Ito, and scholars representing American and European institutions of learning, he made a forceful address commending Yale's earnest purpose, noble aspiration, and intense energy.

CHAPTER XXXVII

RELATIONS WITH THE WHITE HOUSE

Dealings with Many Administrations—The River and Harbor Bill—Marshall Jewell and Garfield—Hawley's Candidacy in 1884—A Critic of Cleveland—Supporter of Harrison.

WITH seven Presidents—Hayes, Garfield, Arthur, Cleveland, Harrison, McKinley, and Roosevelt—Mr. Platt as a Senator was associated during his long stay in Washington. With some his relations were casual, with one at least anything but friendly, with others confidential. When he entered the Senate, Hayes was the occupant of the White House,—a well intentioned Executive, whose administration was always under the shadow of a disputed election, and who lacked the personal prestige and force to gather about him the real leaders of his party in Congress. Hayes committed the fatal blunder of inviting to his official council men without political influence either nationally or in their home communities. He even went so far in two instances as to find Cabinet material in men whose affiliations had not been with the party to which he owed his political advancement and to which he must look for future support. His Cabinet contained eminent men, but only one of them, John Sherman, had a record for distinguished party service in legislation, or could negotiate with Congress on terms of mutual understanding.

The Connecticut Senator, new in national service, had few dealings with the administration save those which were unavoidable in caring for the interests of his State.

During the brief season of Garfield's active incumbency, he seems to have been more frequently at the White House—not on errands of his own choosing, but in a friendly service for those constituents whose eyes were turned in that direction for recognition. He was never a seeker for patronage, and the necessities of office-hunting were distasteful to him, but he did not shirk the duties which the Republicans of Connecticut imposed upon him. One mission in particular he undertook involving tact and discretion. Marshall Jewell, Platt's rival in the famous midnight caucus of 1879, had been Chairman of the Republican National Committee, which conducted the campaign resulting in Garfield's election. He, not unnaturally, expected to share in the prestige of Garfield's success, for in those days, service at the head of the National Committee was rendered gratuitously by recognized party leaders, without intimation of other than political reward. But after the manner of politics, he was a victim of presidential forgetfulness, and with the counting of the ballots his services were no longer needed. He wanted a place in the Cabinet, but the selection of Mr. Blaine as Secretary of State barred the door to other New England men. He would have found consolation in the offer of an ambassadorship which he might have declined; but this salve to his wounded pride was not forthcoming. He was not even asked into the councils of the administration in minor affairs. In his chagrin he turned to Mr. Platt for comfort. It was the Senator's thankless task to act as messenger between

the discomfited Chairman and the White House, in a futile endeavor to bring about a better understanding without conveying the suggestion that Jewell felt himself aggrieved. Garfield's assassination came before the injustice could be remedied, and a little later Jewell was beyond the need of sympathy or aid. When Jewell died, Platt was asked to take his place as the Connecticut member of the National Committee but he declined.

With Garfield's successor, he was on friendly but not intimate terms. By that time he had a position in the Senate which made it worth while for an administration to treat him with respect, but he confined his dealings with the White House to those matters which developed naturally from his official position. He stood behind President Arthur in two important crises. He spoke and voted against the Chinese Exclusion bill which Arthur vetoed, and he opposed at every stage the River and Harbor Bill of 1882, which, notwithstanding the President's veto, became a law. It is a little hard in these days of large expenditure to understand the uproar over a River and Harbor bill carrying an appropriation of less than $19,000,000, but popular feeling, which had condemned the bill while it was under consideration in the House, was fanned into indignation by its passage in the Senate, and flamed into fury on its enactment over the President's veto, contributing in large measure to the overthrow of the Republican majority in the House at the elections which came a few weeks later. Mr. Platt was one of twenty-three Senators who voted against the bill on its original passage, and one of the sixteen who voted to sustain the veto.

With all his respect for President Arthur, he could

not support him for nomination in 1884. Connecticut in that year had a candidate of her own in General Hawley, toward whom there was considerable friendly sentiment throughout the country, but who with other candidates was badly handicapped by the extraordinary popularity of James G. Blaine. Mr. Platt was never a delegate to a national convention, nor was General Hawley after his election to the Senate. Neither would allow his name to be used for the place. On this occasion, however, Platt went to Chicago with a few other Connecticut Republicans to do what he could for his colleague. He was in constant communication with Hawley who remained in Washington and who received thirteen votes on the first ballot, including the twelve votes of the Connecticut delegation. Although he would have preferred another candidate than Blaine, he did what he could for Blaine's election in the campaign which resulted in Democratic majorities in Connecticut, as throughout the country, and he was keenly disappointed in the result. He was too strong a party man to reconcile himself easily to any Democratic administration, and mingled with his natural partisan prejudice was a feeling of personal distrust of the new President, which seems to have been aggravated by the swelling chorus of independent and mugwump adulation. With him the Republican creed was a religion and he had little in common with the New Haven group who were soon busily engaged in burning incense at the Cleveland shrine. There does not seem to have been an important act of the first Cleveland administration with which he was at all in accord. As a former Chairman of the Pensions Committee, familiar with its proceedings, he was quickly brought into antagonism to the new President through

the extraordinary succession of pension vetoes, the spirit of which angered him, and the flippant tone of which offended him. He prepared an exhaustive speech on this subject which he delivered on August 3, 1886, when one of the pension vetoes was under consideration. He took the ground that there must in the nature of the case be a moral and equitable limitation upon the exercise of the veto power, and that the President who conceived that he should veto every bill which as a member of the Senate or the House he would feel called upon to vote against, had mistaken entirely the purpose of the veto, and the circumstances under which it should be exercised:

> If it be established that the President can prevent legislation by vetoing any and every bill which is passed by the two houses, having at his back a portion of one third of each House, then the day of majority rule in this Government is over.

As with the pension vetoes, so with the tariff reform message, with the hair-trigger Chinese exclusion legislation of 1888, with the removal from office of so-called "offensive partisans," with the President's contempt for Congress,—Mr. Platt was completely out of sympathy, and his unfriendly attitude during the first administration he carried over to the second. He disapproved especially Cleveland's course in the campaign of 1892, when, with the acquiescence of the candidate, fusion was effected between the Populists of the West and the money interests of the East; and he regarded as incendiary, inciting to anarchy and unrest, Cleveland's utterances at the time of the Homestead riots. He made up his mind before the inauguration that he would not be beholden to the new

administration for any favors. To a postmaster who wanted reappointment he wrote:

> As I have thought the matter over regarding appointments under Mr. Cleveland, my feeling has been that I would not ask him for anything, or make any recommendations. I do not believe in him at all. I want to be free to express my mind about him and his party, and I do not wish to be under obligations to him or his party. . . . He is going to be a Democratic President from his standpoint. He will probably get a great many Democrats of the country down on him, but at the same time, he is a Democrat, and to my mind, the worst and the most dangerous Democrat in the country, and I am a Republican all over.

The restoration of Queen Liliuokalani to the throne of Hawaii offended his patriotism and his good sense; the repeal of the Sherman law he regarded as a subterfuge to divert attention from the real cause of business depression, and like some other Republican Senators he voted for it only under stress of circumstances. On the whole, he was as much out of touch with the second Cleveland administration as with the first, and yet on two notable occasions he gave it genuine and whole-hearted support. In the matter of the Venezuelan message the President had no more staunch defender and when in July, 1894, Cleveland ordered federal troops to maintain the transportation of mails during the Debs riots at Chicago, Mr. Platt was one of the stoutest advocates of a resolution endorsing the action of the Executive. When it was proposed to add to the endorsement an approval of voluntary arbitration in labor disputes, he vigorously opposed the amendment:

We are confronted with one supreme question and that is, who is President of the United States, and whether we have any United States. The question is whether the person whom we elected is the Chief Executive of the United States or whether a man who calls himself "President Debs" is the President and Chief Executive of the United States. Any other question injected into this discussion seems to me entirely out of place. The Senate should express its approval of what its lawfully elected President has done, and our views about arbitration and all those matters can be discussed hereafter. They are in the form of law. I object to anything except the straight, square, manly endorsement of what President Cleveland has done, and I shall vote against anything else.

That this course both in the Debs affair and in the Venezuelan crisis was actuated purely by patriotic considerations appears in the sequel. We find him writing a little later to a Hartford clergyman:

For Heaven's sake, don't turn to Cleveland. If you are thinking of that, I 'm sure that you don't know him. Though he happens to stand right on the money question and possibly on Cuba, he is so utterly wrong on most questions that I can scarcely think of a greater calamity than his re-election.

While Benjamin Harrison was in the Senate he served for a time as Chairman of the Committee on Territories, of which Mr. Platt was the second member, and when he retired he was succeeded in the chairmanship by the Connecticut Senator. The two men, not altogether unlike in mental habit, entertained for each other a mutual respect. The Connecticut delegation to the National Convention of 1888 did not give Harrison a single vote until the decisive ballot;

but when Harrison came to be nominated at Chicago he wrote to Platt rather playfully, "Our association was so friendly in the Senate that I felt sure that you would at least accept my nomination with resignation," and after the election he replied to a note of congratulation, in a tone of familiarity:

> I did not need to be assured that you rejoiced over the result, and felt some personal satisfaction in my success. I wish I could have gone to the Adirondacks or to the heart of some other wilderness region for the month after the election. I notice your suggestion that I shall follow my own head. Perhaps I may put you to the test in some special matter that you will be urging upon my attention, and I beg now to warn you that this letter of yours will be on file!

The personal relations thus pleasantly indicated continued throughout President Harrison's stay in the White House, and for the four years of his term Mr. Platt was one of the bulwarks of the administration in the Senate, but he doubted the expediency of Harrison's renomination in 1892, and was inclined rather to the selection of some other western man, like Allison, Rusk, or McKinley. The result justified his doubts.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

MCKINLEY AND HANNA

Mr. Platt's Course in 1896—Later a Friend of McKinley and Hanna—Hawley for the Cabinet.

MR. PLATT took little part in the pre-convention politics of 1896. His personal inclination was toward Speaker Reed, and his closest friends in Connecticut were earnest supporters of the Maine candidate; but following his usual custom, he did nothing to influence the choice of delegates. With Mr. McKinley's personal qualities he was less familiar and he was not in sympathy with some of the methods employed to bring about his nomination, but it became evident that McKinley was to be nominated and Mr. Platt was for harmony. There was a great deal of criticism in eastern newspapers of McKinley's attitude on the silver question, and some Republican editors even went to the point of attacking his record almost up to the day of the Convention. To one editor who wrote him asking advice as to the course he should pursue, Mr. Platt sent the following frank reply:

You ask a question which is hard to answer. I think if I were running a newspaper I should go a little slow. If we must take McKinley as a candidate, we do not want to furnish the opposition with ammunition to be used against us in the campaign, do we? There is a very decided feeling among business and financial men, I may say

among all classes, who believe in an unequivocal declaration against free trade or anything like it, that McKinley ought to define his position on the money question at this juncture more satisfactorily, while his special friends and advocates say that he has never in his public utterances failed to state his position in a way that ought to be entirely satisfactory. The platform of the Convention is manifestly to be strong enough and sound enough to satisfy eastern sentiment. Now suppose it turns out that McKinley is nominated and accepts upon such a platform; would it be good policy to have things said now in our newspapers which would be thrown in our faces all through the campaign? It seems to me that I should wait a while, at least. Just now people in Washington are worried more over the attitude in which he is left by the action of the A. P. A. council in Washington than they are by doubts as to where he stands on the money question. That he received a delegation sent from Washington by the council, and communicated with them in private, so to speak, seems to be admitted. I think that was a mistake. If he received such a committee at all it ought to have been in public, or at least with witnesses, and every word that he said made public. The committee came back to Washington and as a result the council action was that the attitude of McKinley was satisfactory to the council. Then after a good many delegates had left, another action was taken by the "tailers" setting up that he had denied in an interview his reception of the committee, and denouncing him. Cardinal Gibbons thereupon comes out with a letter which, read between the lines, is supposed to indicate that he cannot get a Catholic vote if nominated, and that his nomination is to turn the whole campaign into a religious warfare. This condition and attitude is causing very serious questioning in the minds of thoughtful men. . . .

During the time that the delegates were being appointed there was a tremendous rush to McKinley, which seemed almost unaccountable. It looked as if the same rush would

continue up to the time of voting and that he was not only to be nominated, but elected by unprecedented majorities. But since the delegates have all been elected there are symptoms of a reaction, the most prominent symptoms being those which I have indicated: First, the uneasiness as to his money views; second, the uneasiness over this A. P. A. situation, which may all be expressed in the almost unspoken sentiment that he is trying to ride two horses. But in view of the fact that, if nominated, we do not want our own guns turned upon us through the campaign, it seems to me that if I were publishing a newspaper I would wait.

The campaign had not been long in progress before Mr. Platt was ready to acknowledge the peculiar strength of McKinley as a candidate. Early in November he wrote to the President-elect:

I have said many times during this campaign that I regarded your nomination as providential. I doubt if another man of those who were talked about could have been elected. Although rejoicing in the hour of victory, we cannot fail to see that the future is full of problems difficult of solution, and that you will need the united and unanimous support—especially of the Republican Senators. I want here and now to express my desire that there may be the fullest accord between yourself and them upon the great measures which must be considered and acted upon, and to assure you that if re-elected I shall do all in my power to promote it.

When President McKinley came to frame his Cabinet he first asked Nelson Dingley to be Secretary of the Treasury, but Mr. Dingley declined. This left the New England representation in doubt, and Mr. Platt, recalling that no Connecticut man had occupied a seat in the Cabinet since Gideon Welles, bethought himself

of bringing about the selection of General Hawley as Secretary of War. He said nothing about it to his colleague, but early in January he wrote to a mutual friend, John R. Buck, of Hartford:

I want to write you in absolute confidence. Do you think it would be a good thing to try to get General Hawley into the Cabinet? Now, this is the first intimation I have made in this direction to anyone and I shall not say any word about it until I get a letter from you. The reason I write you is that as the matter now stands I do not believe there is any man from New England who is likely to go into the Cabinet. The supposition that Dingley was going there has kept out all other candidates except Boutelle, but I do not believe that there is any chance for him. I myself think, without being able to speak with authority, that Mr. Dingley is not going into the Cabinet and I do not see where the New England man is coming from. Massachusetts has no candidate, neither has Vermont or Rhode Island. Governor Bussie[1] is talked of. I think that if it were best to urge the matter and was agreeable to General Hawley, he might have a very good chance to go into the Cabinet.

The response to this letter was not encouraging, and Mr. Platt telegraphed to Senator Proctor who had gone to Cleveland at Mr. Hanna's request, to talk over the selection of a New England member of the Cabinet, that General Hawley's Connecticut friends thought it unwise to make any movement in that direction. A letter to Mr. Buck at the same time throws an interesting light upon political conditions:

I think that the situation yesterday was such that there might have been a very good chance to bring about such a result if it had been thought advisable, but I could

[1] Of New Hampshire.

not well talk with General Hawley about it, and did the next best thing I could think of—consult you—and have left it just in the way in which I told you. But I think when Senator Proctor finally left, it was with some idea that it was possible that Mr. Edmunds might not refuse an invitation to become Secretary of State, and while there was no ground perhaps for supposing that Mr. McKinley would ask him, that Senator Proctor was inclined to advise it as a solution of the New England problem. I don't think anything will come of that, however. Everything is all at sea about the Cabinet. Confidentially, I will say to you I think Mr. McKinley did not indicate to Allison that he would be glad to have him take the Treasury, but did want him to become Secretary of State. Now the talk is that he will offer the Secretaryship of State to Mr. Sherman, and how much reliance there is to be placed in that I do not know. I doubt it very much. If he should, and Senator Sherman should accept, it would be very disappointing to those who know Mr. Sherman. I very much fear that the whole matter will be an illustration of the old proverb, "through the woods, and through the woods, and cut a crooked stick at last." It does not seem to me that Mr. McKinley has gone about the business of selecting a Cabinet in a way calculated to produce the best results. I fear he is too much under the influence and direction of Mr. Hanna, and that Cabinet-making is being carried on somewhat after the methods learned by Mr. Hanna in his political campaign, but I do not know that I am right about this. If anything further should turn up looking to the selection of a Cabinet officer from Connecticut I will consult with you immediately.

A week later he felt impelled to appeal directly to Mr. Hanna with whom up to that time he had been in only formal communication, thus initiating a correspondence which led to one of the most intimate personal associations of his career:

Honorable MARK HANNA, Cleveland, Ohio.

MY DEAR SIR:

Is this Cabinet making a case of "Ask, and ye shall receive, knock and it shall be opened unto you," or is it a case of the President selecting a Cabinet without undue solicitation? I make this inquiry rather in a playful than serious frame of mind, because in all the gossip, newspaper prophesy, and assertion, I have seen no evidence that it is understood anywhere that Connecticut is a New England State at all. Perhaps it is our fault that we have not been advertising and booming it.

Sincerely yours,

O. H. PLATT.

From this introduction the following entertaining correspondence resulted:

(*Personal*)

CLEVELAND, OHIO, January 20, 1897.

MY DEAR SENATOR PLATT:

Like you, I had supposed the selection of his Cabinet would have been left to the President himself, but it appears from the newspapers and some things that have happened, that such is not to be the case.

By the way, the receipt of your letter was the first intimation I had received that you are a candidate for Cabinet honors. Unlike most applicants, you must have applied to the President direct, instead of to me. Had you filed your application here we would have boomed you, and Connecticut would have been duly advertised. Has Connecticut still a candidate? If so, we 'll boom her.

Truly yours,

M. A. HANNA.

January 25, 1897.

Honorable O. H. PLATT, Washington, D. C.

DEAR MR. HANNA:

I have your favor of January 20th. If you suppose I was writing my former letter because I hoped that

lightning might strike me, you were never more mistaken. But I do hope that General Hawley may be thought of for Secretary of War or of the Navy. I suppose it is our own fault that we do not keep Connecticut continually in the public eye; but strange as it may seem, I think we are more modest up in that State than people in other localities.

Very truly yours,
O. H. Platt.

Cleveland, Ohio, January 28, 1897.

Honorable O. H. Platt, Washington, D. C.

My dear Senator:

I am in receipt of yours of the twenty-fifth instant. I don't think I "suspected" you, and I am sure your valuable service in the Senate will be a consolation to the new administration.

I cannot give you any reliable information as to what consideration is being given to your State. Personally, I appreciate her loyal support in the campaign, and desire to express my high esteem of her distinguished Senators.

Truly yours,
M. A. Hanna.

Though nothing came of the proposal to give Connecticut representation in the Cabinet, the relations thus begun were soon to become much closer. Mr. Hanna a few weeks later entered the Senate as John Sherman's successor, and he lost no time in cultivating the friendship of the older statesman for whom he soon conceived a deep affection, which was returned in kind.[1]

[1] When Senator Hanna was fighting hard for re-election in the fall of 1903, Mr. Platt issued the following statement: "Ohio owes to the country as well as to itself the return of Senator Hanna to the United States Senate as his own successor. He has won, and justly so, the position of a trusted and conspicuous Senatorial leader. His ability, his integrity, and his influence are recognized by all. Ohio has had many great Senators, but none greater

From that time to the day he rested finally from his labors, the Ohio leader had no closer or more loving associate. For many months, the two Senators lived in neighboring apartments at the same hotel; for days at a time they ate at the same table. The intimacy between them which grew from companionship and mutual confidence, served also to bring the Connecticut Senator into confidential relations with the new President. When the Cuban situation became acute in the following winter, Mr. Platt was, next to Mr. Hanna himself, the Senator called into consultation most frequently at the White House, and, through many trying weeks of anxious suspense, he was an intermediary between the administration and the Senate. During the months succeeding the war, when new questions of grave importance were pressing upon him, President McKinley turned instinctively to him for counsel and support, and throughout the administration he remained its close and constant adviser, not only in Cuban affairs but also on every other serious governmental problem. In President McKinley as a man he grew to have an abiding faith, of which he was never reluctant to make profession. Once in the Senate he said:

The people of the country have confidence in William McKinley as President of the United States. I go a little further than that, and I aver that no President of the United States while holding the office of President ever had the confidence, the respect, the love, and the affection

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I think than Marcus A. Hanna, none truer, none braver, none stronger. The effect of his loss as a Senator can only be compared to the effect of the loss of a great general to an army during the stress of battle. His return to the Senate ought not to be for a moment in doubt."

of the people to the extent which President McKinley has. Other Presidents have been canonized after their death; they have passed into history as entitled to confidence, respect, and love, but no President who, now dead, is thus respected, ever escaped in office the criticisms, the innuendoes, and the attacks which President McKinley has justly escaped.

When the news came from Buffalo of the attack on the President's life Mr. Platt thus gave expression to his grief:

President McKinley was so great and good and had the welfare of the whole people so much at heart that it seems impossible that any human being should wish to injure him. No one can find words fully to express what all feel. No more dastardly crime was ever attempted. The weapon fired at the President was aimed also at every citizen of the Republic. In our distress and fear we can only hope and pray and wait.

CHAPTER XXXIX

ROOSEVELT

A Loyal Supporter of Roosevelt—Urges Nomination in 1904—Appeals to Business Interests—For Moderation in 1905.

WITH the closing of the lid of McKinley's coffin, Senator Platt, advanced in years though he was, turned to the future with youthful hope and courage. Concerning the new President he knew little from personal contact. Such meetings as there had been between the two had been casual. To Colonel Roosevelt likewise, Senator Platt was little better than a name—one of several whom he recognized as among the leaders of the Senate. No two men could be more unlike in temperament. They were as widely apart in manner and political association as they were in years. Yet they were to be drawn close, one to the other, and to work in effective co-operation, though not always in complete accord as to method, so long as the Senator lived. The younger and more impetuous man learned very soon to look to the elder for counsel. He had not been in the White House a week before he sent for Mr. Platt and appealed to him for suggestion and advice. The response was prompt and generous, and from the confidence then bestowed there sprung a liking between the two which developed into a strong attachment. "What an old trump he is!" exclaimed the President on one occasion when the support of

Mr. Platt had been especially timely; and on another occasion, "Of all the public men I have known, he is the frankest in his political dealings." After the Senator's death, he said to a visitor at the White House, "He was the grandest and noblest man I ever knew!" Senator Platt in turn regarded Roosevelt as one of the most extraordinary characters in American history. He believed in the President's honesty of purpose, in his fearlessness, and in his ultimate effectiveness. Shortly after his assumption of office, the President had occasion to visit his sister at her summer home in Farmington, Connecticut, and he invited the Senator and Mrs. Platt to meet him there. The two talked over many questions of public policy freely and frankly. After the meeting, Mr. Platt wrote to a friend a strikingly prophetic appreciation of the President's character and aims:

I saw the President last Tuesday at Farmington and had quite a talk with him. I think he will do well. He is as modest a man as ever lived. Positive, aggressive, and full of intensity, but, with it all, he has one thing which is going to take him through, and that is a determination to do the right thing as he sees it. He will stir up the people in various ways, and I think our American people are going to like a man who is positive, aggressive, and ambitious—those elements in Jackson which gained for him the sobriquet of "Old Hickory," and attached our people to him as they have never been attached to any other President. They like it; they like a man who is something out of the ordinary, and my present thought about Roosevelt is that he is going to have a tremendous popular following.

From that time till the day of his death, Mr. Platt, while not agreeing with President Roosevelt in

all respects, gave him a loyal support. In the inner councils of the Senate, he patiently impressed upon his associates how indispensable it was always to bear in mind Mr. Roosevelt's opinions and his influence among the people. Many a time when the little group of Republican leaders had nearly reached a conclusion after a period of communing, he, sitting almost silent until then, would change the whole trend of the talk, with the slowly spoken suggestion: "But, you have omitted a very important consideration—the Man in the White House."

It will never be fully known how great an influence upon the history of those days he exerted, through temperate suggestions at one end of the avenue and stimulating advice at the other. For over three years he, more than any other, contributed to the harmonious workings of the executive and legislative branches of the Government.

As the time for naming a Republican candidate in 1904 approached, Mr. Platt was one of the first to see that the only safe course for the party was to nominate Roosevelt and go to the people in unqualified endorsement of the Roosevelt administration. In spite of his warm friendship for Mark Hanna he did not hesitate when it came to the question with several busy political groups whether Roosevelt or Hanna should be the Republican nominee. The fact that Hanna's nomination would have been taken by the country to mean a repudiation of Roosevelt's ideals was enough to determine his course. The influence of the great moneyed interests, some of which were powerfully exerting themselves in Hanna's behalf, only stimulated him to efforts for Roosevelt, such as he had never before volunteered for a candidate for nomination. The

letters and appeals which he sent out during the months preceding the Republican convention to his closest correspondents in financial circles, might well become a part of the recorded history of a strenuous time.

As early as May, 1903, the question of Roosevelt's nomination became acute through Hanna's opposition to a formal endorsement by the Ohio State Convention —an opposition which was promptly withdrawn after a spirited exchange of telegrams. Mr. Platt writing to Colonel Philo Pratt Hotchkiss, of Brooklyn, on May 28th, touched on this political incident:

I do not quite understand Hanna's action in opposing the endorsement of the President by the Ohio Convention. Ohio politics, like New York politics, gives one the headache when he attempts to study the situation out. I think Senator Hanna has been a very good friend of President Roosevelt's administration, perfectly loyal, and in no sense a candidate himself, but I apprehend that he has felt more strongly than Republican politicians generally that there is a coolness toward the President on the part of financial people in New York and elsewhere, and that something might happen between now and 1904 which would make it impossible to secure their support for him, and that, therefore, it would be wiser not to try to forestall the matter. I feel pretty certain from what I know of him that Mr. Hanna has no other candidate, and that if conditions should be the same a year hence, he would be in favor of the nomination of Mr. Roosevelt, but you see he has set himself right in this matter. I think he felt that he had made a mistake.

In spite of the Ohio episode, the talk about Hanna's candidacy persisted and Connecticut friends of the President began to write the Senator anxious letters. To one of these, late in November, he replied:

If I understand the situation, Mr. Hanna is not a candidate for the Presidency, will not be, and deplores all this talk; but how can he stop it? That there is an opposition to the nomination of President Roosevelt, is undoubtedly true. It is not very extensive, or very influential, but noisy, and, in my judgment, will utterly fail when the Convention is held—indeed, I doubt if it manifests itself there. It comes from both ends of the party—from the moneyed influences in Wall Street, and the agitators in the labor movement—one as much as the other. Each of these elements wish to force the President to make terms with them, but he will not do it. I think I know that Senator Hanna does not sympathize with this in the least. I have a higher regard, and more genuine respect for him than you seem to have. I believe that he is a straightforward, earnest, truthful man, who acts from conviction, fears no one, and makes no effort to improperly conciliate people who disagree with him. He is very much like President Roosevelt in this respect.

As the interest became more intense he volunteered appeals in quarters where he thought they would be of greatest value. To a long valued friend, allied with one of the giant corporations, he wrote on December 11, 1903:

I do not know just how much importance to attach to the current opposition to Roosevelt, by what are called the "corporate and money influences" in New York. There is a great deal said about it, as if it were widespread and violent. I know that it does not include the whole of that class of people, because I know many bankers and capitalists, railroad and business men, who are his strong, good friends, and they are not among the smaller and weaker parties either. They do not talk as much about it as those who oppose him, but they are, nevertheless, loyal and staunch friends of the President. Now, it is a great

mistake for capitalistic interests to oppose Roosevelt. His nomination is as certain as the time comes, in my judgment. I think he will be nominated by acclamation, so what is to be gained by the Wall Street contingent and the railroad interests in this seeming opposition to him? I cannot help thinking that the New York gentlemen who are supposed to be antagonistic to him, are making the mistake of their lives, in supposing that they can either control the Republican nomination, or defeat Roosevelt, if nominated. They seem to have become possessed of the idea that they are the controlling forces in such matters; that if they do not contribute to a large campaign fund, the candidate cannot be elected; that if they were to contribute to the Democratic campaign fund, that would insure the election of the Democrat. They do not realize that they have the whole country against them. I do not say it ought to be against them, but that it *is* against them, and if it were understood that they were controlling the Republican nomination, their candidate would lack the support of the people generally, or if it were thought that Roosevelt had made terms with them, it would be almost impossible to elect him. You know how this is. There is a deep-seated prejudice against the wealthy people on the part of the common people, so-called—and they will not go for what the moneyed classes, as they are called, are supposed to want. Legislation cannot be defeated in any way so easily as to say that the trusts want it. The passage of legislation can be in no manner so easily insured, as to say that the trusts do not want it, and by the word "trusts" the people mean all parties who are engaged in large business enterprises.

Now, these gentlemen who do not like Roosevelt ought to look at it in another way. They ought to understand that his nomination is a foregone conclusion; that against him is to be nominated some Democrat; that the election of this Democrat means the election of a Democratic House of Representatives. Do they realize what that means, or

would mean to business interests, and are they willing to illustrate the old saying of "A man biting off his nose to spite his face"? It seems to me that they are all wrong, and very foolish, and that this grows out of an almost insane notion they have that they can control politics, and that what they say and what they want must be accepted.

I write this to you because I want to get your opinion of how strong this opposition to Roosevelt is. The opposition appears to think that if Hanna should be nominated he could be elected. He could not begin to be elected. There is no Republican in the United States who can be elected except Roosevelt, and Hanna would be buried out of sight. They seem to think that if they could get George Gray nominated on the Democratic side, they could elect him. They can not nominate George Gray, and they could not elect him if they did. They seem to believe that they could elect Parker. I know they could not, but if they could, he would be just what McClellan is going to be as Mayor of New York—absolutely controlled by the most dangerous elements of the Democratic party. There is no use in my running on about this—I only want to know what you think about it.

To the same correspondent on December 30th, he wrote again:

I rather look now for a nomination by acclamation. The criticism against him [Roosevelt] has been tested and is seen to be carping only. It is based on a supposed condition which does not exist, namely: That the President is an unsafe man. I am not his worshipper, but I do maintain that he is a conservative President rather than an ambitious or an unsafe one, and that the country is infinitely better off under his administration than it would be under any Democratic administration—I don't care who the President might be.

A President represents his party, and I long ago made up my mind that the Democrat who poses as better than his party is the most dangerous and unsafe man in it. When you come to think of it, what reliance could be placed on Parker, or Gorman, or Olney, or Cockrell—the four now talked about as possible candidates? Each of them would be first a Democrat, with all the interests of his party at heart, and if, as might be hoped by the conservative element of the party, so-called, he stood out against the great majority of his party, he would be without power. If I were a Republican, fearful that Roosevelt would do something that I thought he ought not to, I would not help elect one of these men in the hope that he would be better, according to my ideas, than Roosevelt, nor would you.

Mind you I am not apologizing for or defending Roosevelt. I commend him. Looking over his whole legislative acts I cannot find one that I would have had otherwise, or one which I think was to the detriment of our country. I suppose that men in New York below Fourteenth Street and men in other sections of the country who take their cue from the former, would not agree with me. The people who control great combinations of capital want free course to run and be glorified. Men who have lost money as the result of these great combinations also charge that up to the administration. Politicians who sought personal power and aggrandizement have been disappointed, and mugwumps think that the President has played politics too much. Employers feel that the President has sympathized too much with labor unions, but the leaders of labor unions think that in the success of the Democratic party their schemes would be advanced. The opposition to Roosevelt comes from extremists. While I do not think he can be accused of steering a middle course between them for any personal reasons, the fact that he has not been an extremist, demonstrates what I said a little while ago, that he is a conservative rather than an unsafe man. He has had, I

think, one idea which has guided him, and that is to do what he thinks right in every emergency. No man could have a stronger desire in this direction than he, and that is just what the people want, and it is why the great mass of the Republican party supports him. And he is going to be nominated, and he is going to be elected. He is going to be the people's candidate, not the candidate of the trusts or of the hoodlums, but of the conservative elements.

Although convinced that Roosevelt was to be nominated, he did not venture any risks so far as his own State was concerned. To one of the most influential Republicans in the State, Charles F. Brooker, he wrote on February 1st:

What do you hear about delegates from Connecticut to the National Convention? I have not one word to say as to who should go, but I do hope that no one will be complimented by being selected unless it is understood that he is for Roosevelt. We have never instructed in our Conventions, and have heretofore sent persons more because they were anxious to go than because they were in favor of any particular candidate, with the result that we have had divided delegations. I am very anxious, as I know you are, to have a solid Roosevelt delegation, and to be certain that no one goes who is opposed to him. No such person should be permitted to go just because he is a good fellow and wants to go.

Roosevelt was nominated by acclamation, as probably would have been the case, even had Mark Hanna lived; for before Mr. Hanna took to his bed in his final illness, the nomination of the President was assured. Throughout the pre-convention season, and later, during the campaign, Senator Platt, with sure political insight, insisted that the President's personality must be the dominating note. To Representative

E. J. Hill, a few weeks before the Chicago Convention, he wrote:

"*The* point in the platform should be *Roosevelt*—that is what we have to stand on."

This theme he emphasized in every speech he made during the campaign. Presiding over the State Convention at Hartford, on September 13th, he said:

If the Democratic party chooses to make Roosevelt, the man, the issue in this campaign we welcome that issue without fear. Every citizen of the United States, from the professional politician to the schoolboy in his teens, knows that in the heart of Theodore Roosevelt, the President, there is one overshadowing purpose, and that is to do what Roosevelt, the man, believes to be honest, right, and true. What has he done that was not honest, right, and true? In the interest of all that makes for American honor let us have a President who has but one guiding principle, and that to do what he believes to be right, for the honor of his country, for the upbuilding of its people, for the glory of its name.

Would you have the people think him unsafe? No man is unsafe whose life is clean, and pure, and noble, and who walks in one path only, the path where duty seems to him to point. In all that represents American manhood, American character, American progress, American welfare, Theodore Roosevelt stands forth to-day our most conspicuous example. It was because the Republicans of the United States recognized this that they demanded with one voice that he should be called to further duty and further service, in that most exalted of all places, in that most responsible and wearing of all positions, the Presidency of the United States.[1]

[1] At the Hyperion Theatre in New Haven, on November 3d, when he occupied the platform jointly with Mr. Taft, he said in the course of a glowing eulogy of the President: "I want to speak of a man—I may say *the* man, who more than any other to-day,

No sooner was the election over than the forces of unrest began to bestir themselves. Newspapers, constantly on the lookout for political sensation, encouraged and predicted radical doings at Washington. The President, sustained by an unprecedented expression of popular confidence, was credited with all sorts of revolutionary intentions. There was to be an immediate revision of the tariff. The trusts were to be attacked without mercy and beaten into submission; the railroads were to be brought to book. The air was full of

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fills the mind and heart of the American people. That man is Theodore Roosevelt. Failing in an appeal to the people on questions usually called 'issues,' the opposition has concentrated with batteries of folly and hate upon him. They have made Theodore Roosevelt the man, and the President, the issue in this campaign, and we accept it willingly, joyfully even—for if it were possible to conceive of the American people turning their backs on Theodore Roosevelt, it would mark the beginning of the reversal of those policies and principles and deeds that have, in these last eight years, made us the greatest of all peoples under the sun. But what of the man? No manlier man has ever lived in our history. In all those qualities which make up the sum of American manhood, he has no superior. Intense physical, mental, and moral strength are his characteristics. Honesty that goes to the very core of his being; patriotism that dominates every thought and act; energies that seek the realization of the highest ideals in life and government—these are the characteristics of Theodore Roosevelt. Graduated from Harvard twenty-four years ago, his record and life prove conclusively the qualities which I have ascribed to him. It is a life and a record of which statesmen are proud, which the young men of the Republic should emulate, which the children should study, as they study the lives of the world's great men. He came to his present station without intrigue, and without self-seeking. He was nominated for the Vice-Presidency in 1900 because the people of the United States had come to know him, because his fame had covered the land between the two oceans, and because the thoughtful and far-seeing citizens saw in him the man most fitted to be associated with William McKinley, and if the occasion ever came, to take up the work of that great, gracious, beloved—now martyred—President."

disturbing rumors. Mr. Platt was distressed by the tone of newspaper comment. To a brother Senator, four days after the election, he wrote:

> It is a time to go slow. It is a time for the President to drop the strenuous, and take up the simple life for a while. He ought not, in my judgment, to make one single positive recommendation in his next message—there is no occasion for it. We want time to think and to turn around. A lot of mischief can be done if we do not have it, and betwixt the construction of the Cabinet and the recommendations for legislation, the newspaper correspondents, who have nothing else to do, will have the whole country stirred up.

The President respected newspaper forecasts in his annual message only in the recommendation of stringent legislation regarding railroad rates; but throughout the winter the chorus of radicalism increased and Mr. Platt with other staunch Republicans began to fear for the future. He felt that something would have to be done sooner or later toward the regulation of railroad rates, but he did not believe that the time was immediately ripe and he was averse to drastic legislation at any time. His mind was filled with a vague dread. To a leading Connecticut business man he wrote on January 16, 1905:

> I wonder if people around the country worry as much over things as I do. I hope not. There are tendencies now which I do not like very well, and yet I question whether or not I am too much of an old fogy to keep up with the procession, or whether the procession is really moving too fast.

In one of his last letters, written only a few weeks before his death, he lamented: "Congress is just as

likely to go wild some day as the Kansas legislature, and a conservative man is liable any moment to find himself trampled out of sight."

Through all this time and up to the hour of his final departure from Washington he was in constant communication with the White House and it was his pleasure to advance so far as he could in the Senate the arbitration treaties which the administration keenly desired. What would have been his course in the fruitful days so soon to follow is a question which those who survived him have often asked themselves, grieving that at so critical a time the country should not have had the benefit of his sage and patriotic counsel.

CHAPTER XL

POLITICS AND PATRONAGE

A Stranger to Political Manipulation—Annoyed by Office Seekers —Zealous for Connecticut.

TO a mastery of the art of politics, Mr. Platt made no pretension. The details of the machinery of political management carried no special appeal to him. In his earlier years he had taken an active interest in the work of party organization, first with the American or "Know Nothing" party, and later with the Republican party, but it had been because he saw in that occupation a means to great ends to which he pinned his faith. Prior to 1856 he had been Chairman of the State Committee of the American party, which seemed to him as a young man to offer at the moment the weapon closest at hand for striking a blow at the cause of slavery. A little later he became identified with the Republican organization, which was to hold his allegiance to the end, and there, too, he speedily came to participate in the active management of the party's affairs, serving for a time as Chairman of the State Committee. He showed throughout this stage of his career a high talent for organization and there never was a time when he did not emphasize among his political associates the importance of systematized political effort. But of the more subtle art of manipulation, of trades, of combinations, he was as innocent as a child,

and he disdained to avail himself of it even when his personal political fortunes were at hazard. Writing on March 30, 1896, to Charles F. Chapin, the editor of the Waterbury *American* he said:

Much obliged for your editorial in the *American* referring to myself. And yet, I think the *Herald* is pretty nearly right in its assertion that I am "not an expert in the arts of the politician"—that is to say, I have never had any personal political following in Connecticut. I have never tried to influence nominations or to build myself up by patronage or bargains. I can not do it now, if I would, and I will not. I could no more attempt to make an organization which would look after the nominations for the Senate and the House in my interest than I could fly. I have had just one object and purpose here, and that is to represent my State as well as I could in the Senate. I incline to the belief that a large majority of Republicans would be glad to see me re-elected, and if so, I hope that their wishes may prevail against any arts of expert politicians. If the people want someone else, I shall, of course, submit with the best grace that I can.

Writing about the same time to J. H. McDonald of New Haven, he gave expression to the same thought in a little different way:

You see that I have no organization. I never have attempted to have one. I have never felt that it was necessary to have a Platt party in Connecticut. I have been quite content to commend myself, if I could, by my actions, to the confidence of the people generally so I am in just this situation—I think from what I hear that among the voters of the Republican party there is generally speaking a desire that I should be returned as Senator. If this sentiment exists, it exists without any organization upon my part; without any effort to create it through the efforts of political friends in the different sections and towns of

the State. And while in a way, I know, and am in touch with a good many Republicans in most of the towns, I have never asked them the question whether they were for my return, and I never asked them to do anything for me.

He never had a political manager or a personal representative in Connecticut to keep an eye on his political fences. Replying on July 14, 1895, to an intimate friend who had advised him to let whoever was looking after his interests attend to the publication and distribution of a speech, he said:

> There is no one, absolutely no one looking out for my interests; plenty of good friends but no one to plan or give time or thought or labor to any work in my behalf. This may seem strange to you, but it is literally true. I can really do nothing for myself, and there is no one to do anything for me, except to wish me well and assure me that nothing needs to be done.

That even to the end of his career, however, he showed an appreciation of the larger forces of politics —of the influence of the press, of systematic canvasses, of deliberate cultivation of public sentiment, is shown throughout his correspondence; and he regarded it always as a proper function for a United States Senator to watch and encourage these forces, although he seems rarely to have used his influence, save when greatly moved, as during the campaign of 1904, when the election of President Roosevelt was in the balance. He was then at his home in Judea, and becoming anxious about the way things were going in Connecticut, he wrote, on September 19th, to Michael Kenealy, Chairman of the Republican State Central Committee; after reviewing the situation generally, and pointing out dangers and pitfalls, he concluded:

Now, why all this talk? Simply that I think the Republican State Committee ought to make unusual efforts for thorough organization and active work at once. Years ago we used to have a canvass of the State, a regular house to house canvass, so that what every voter was going to do was known in advance. Then came our registration law, and the work of making a canvass fell into disuse and the registrars were looked to for the information. I do not suppose that it is possible to go back to the old way of doing things. It was a time when Republican workers used to do it for the love of the thing, and men were found in every town who were glad to do it, and did it effectively, and it seems to me that something should be devised to get better information than we have been in the habit of getting lately. I do not know what, I am sure, but it has seemed to me that this was manifestly a campaign which ought to attract the young men, and young men in every town might be stirred up to the work. . . .

I do not know how you are going to reach the towns. You have your State Committee, the members of which are so filled with other schemes for nomination of state officers and Senators and Representatives, that they work at that more than they work for a complete and effective organization of voters. The first Monday of October is right on us—it comes on the third, and that is only thirteen days off. We have had very great success in carrying the towns until we have such a large proportion of them that it is hard to increase it, and easy to lose some towns. If there is a falling off in the number of towns we carry, it will be heralded as an indication of Democratic strength and will give the Democrats hope.

It was not often that he permitted himself to enter thus explicitly into the details of management. His first election to the Senate had been effected with the expenditure of hardly any money, and without the stain of a combination or trade and every subsequent election

came with unanimity. To the election of delegates for national conventions, to the influencing of the choice of the State for a Republican nominee for President, he was customarily indifferent. His only interest was that the State of Connecticut should not be subject to misrepresentation in the national councils of the party. He believed religiously in putting none but Republicans on guard[1] but the "spoils of office" was distasteful to him. "I hate the whole thing which is known as patronage" he wrote to G. Wells Root of Hartford, March 4, 1890, "and want to have just as little to do with it as is consistent with my duty to the State," and toward the end of his service he wrote to a department official: "I long ago learned that when a person is appointed on my recommendation, it only makes me a lot of additional worry and trouble." Yet he was compelled to participate to some extent in the scramble for office, particularly in 1889 and 1897, when the Republicans came into power after periods of Democratic control. His experiences, at the beginning of the Harrison administration especially, resulted in vexation of spirit, as a glance at correspondence written while he was passing through them will show. To a Hartford applicant for office, who complained that he had not been considerately treated, Mr. Platt wrote on March 25, 1889:

I regret that you should have been disappointed in your interviews with me, or should have felt that I had anything but a kind feeling toward you. I did not intend to convey

[1] "The only suggestion that I want to make to you about the appointments of deputies is that you should n't appoint Democrats in any instance. It is very few offices that we have, and I want them to be filled by Republicans."—Letter to E. F. Strong, Bridgeport, Aug. 13, 1890.

any such impression; but you took me at a time when I had not averaged more than five hours' sleep for ten days—the last days of the session being spent in severe work and at a time when others were waiting for me, and when everyone I saw wanted me to do something to get them an office. Perhaps I was impatient. . . . I recognize fully your services for the Republican party, and do not intend in any way to belittle them. If there is anything I can do in the way of helping you to a position which would be agreeable to you, and to which you would be adapted, I should be quite willing to do so. But there seems to be an erroneous idea—I won't say that you have it—that in some way I have offices to dispose of, or that I can get people appointed to office by merely saying so, whereas, I find, and am made to feel every day, that Connecticut is an exceedingly small State, and gets very little consideration.

To Samuel H. Crampton of Madison, Connecticut, he wrote on April 5, 1890:

I know there is disappointment more or less marked and felt over appointments; but if you will think of it for a moment I think you will conclude that this is inevitable. I do not believe any power short of omniscience could avoid it; and you know that, although the Supreme Being is omniscient, there are a great many people who are not ready to think that what he does and orders is the best thing after all.

I wish it were possible to get along and have every one satisfied; but it never was and never will be under our system of selecting officials. And I do not know that that system can be improved. It seems to me one of the weak spots in our Government. When we have carried an election, the attention of the people is turned, at once, away from the principles which have been fought out, to the question of who will get the offices.

As to general appointments, there can not be one for

every fifty persons who want them; and, when it comes down to local offices, it is very seldom that there is any unanimity as to who should fill them; and so a large portion of the Republicans feel, whatever is done, that their ideas of what is best were disregarded. Of course the man who gets the office and his friends are satisfied, but they are usually in the minority; that is, other persons who wanted the office, and their friends, are the larger number; and so there inevitably comes a feeling of disappointment and discouragement, and it finds expression in criticisms more or less pronounced. If you will think of it for a moment you will see that this must be so. . . . Really, however, the offices are but a minor part of politics; measures are of infinitely more consequence than men; and whether a particular man is Senator or Governor or postmaster, or any other official, is a matter of small consequence compared with the principles which obtain in government.

To a disappointed Hartford aspirant he said:

However disagreeable any appointments may have been to you, I want you to stop a minute before you finally conclude upon the action indicated in your letter. Do not commit yourself in the direction you speak of just now. I would like to have an opportunity to talk it over with you before we part political company. I do not care anything about the next election in Connecticut, so far as my personal fortunes are concerned. I am quite ready, if Connecticut wants to send some other Republican to the Senate, to coincide with the wishes of the people in that respect. But I should be mortified to have Connecticut send a Democrat to the Senate, and notwithstanding your present disappointment, I think you would be also.

It was bad enough to be fretted with the local rivalries of politicians at home but even more exasperating was the demand upon him from clerks in the departments

in Washington who claimed Connecticut as their legal residence and who looked to his influence for increase in salary. One of these, a clerk in the pension office who had been especially insistent in his demands, elicited a rejoinder which he was not likely soon to forget:

I tell you very frankly I do not like the method which you take with reference to your promotion, or the tone of your letters to me on the subject. I have been disposed to help you. I have spent more time trying to help you than in case of any other clerk in Washington. I do not like this continued prodding and continued instruction on your part as to what I am to do in the matter. You evidently misunderstand the position and duties of a Senator.

The demand upon him at the beginning of the McKinley administration was not nearly as trying as it had been eight years earlier, and with advancing years he seems to have been relieved somewhat of the importunity of office seekers, greatly to his satisfaction. Once in a while he would be called upon to make requests at the White House or the departments. He would always do what he could, though pleading lack of influence, as in the case of the Litchfield County clergyman who asked him to secure a boy's appointment to Annapolis, and to whom he replied:

I do not think that I have any considerable influence with this administration in such matters. I have tried in times past, the best I knew how, to obtain such appointments from the President to the naval academy or to West Point, and always without success. I do not belong to the crowd of politicians, and when a man who will not place himself under obligations, encounters those who are willing to render favors when they ask favors, he has very

little of that thing which is popularly called "influence." Nevertheless, I will do all I can.

He was chary of promises and scrupulously reluctant to take credit for results to which he felt he had not effectively contributed, as when he refused to accept the thanks of a New York clergyman whose brother had received an appointment, "because it came about independent of any effort upon my part," and that, too, though he had written many letters and been at considerable pains to enable the young man to qualify.

While out of patience with the whole scheme of patronage, Mr. Platt was jealous of the claims of his State to proportionate representation in the public service. When President McKinley succeeded President Cleveland he strove religiously to secure for Connecticut a continuance, under Republican administration, of the more important offices which had been enjoyed by Connecticut Democrats—not, however, with any great success. During the Roosevelt administration the consul-general at Ottawa, a Connecticut man, resigned, and the President promptly named a new consul-general without conferring with the Connecticut Senators. "I have not yet learned who the President appointed," Mr. Platt wrote to a Connecticut Representative, "but I do not take it kindly that immediately and without waiting to hear from me, he should fill that place. I propose to have it out with him when I see him!"

A Connecticut candidate for general appraiser in New York was told that he might make application for the position of assistant appraiser, but that he would need the endorsement of Senator Thomas C. Platt.

This filled the Connecticut Platt with wrath. He wrote to Secretary Shaw:

I want to say that I do not think it necessary that a man, whose residence is in Connecticut, should be required either to show that he belongs to the Republican organization in New York or that he has obtained the endorsement of Senator Platt of New York, as a condition of appointment. The State of Connecticut is as much within the customs district of New York as is the State of New York, and the appraiser's duties affect business in Connecticut, the same as in New York. I do not acknowledge the right of Senator Platt to control these appointments. If you would be willing to appoint Mr. —— on his merits and endorsements, and from what you know, and have learned of him, I think my recommendation should be just as potential as that of Senator Platt of New York. I do not think that any of the appointments connected with the New York custom-house ought to be considered political appointments; I believe that they should be made on purely business principles, and for the benefit of the service, rather than for the benefit of any political organization.

When the same man, having received the appointment, asked his advice about joining the Republican organization in New York, Mr. Platt advised him not to do it:

I presume I could take care of you in case of difficulty, better as a Connecticut man, than as a New York man. I imagine that backing from New York requires a lot of political subserviency—backing from Connecticut will not.

It happened that on his very last call at the White House,—on March 25, 1905, a few hours before his final departure from Washington, the talk turned upon the subject of Connecticut's meagre representation in the public service. Under the Cleveland administration the State had been recognized by some of the choicest

appointments in the President's gift: Treasurer of the United States, Consul-General at London, Commissioner of Patents, and numerous consuls and minor officers. As these places became vacant, they had been filled gradually by appointments from other States. On returning to his rooms Mr. Platt dictated the following letter to the President :

Referring to our conversation this morning, you will realize that in all the years you have been President I have not pushed or begged for appointments. The result is, as I indicated this morning, that Connecticut has no foreign minister, no secretary of legation, no consul-general, no person connected with the departments who has to be confirmed by the Senate, with the exception of one—a two thousand dollar place in the land office. I think it is my fault; I should have been urgent and persistent, but I do not like to be. It is not because we have no good men in the State, though I do not think there is the usual pressure for office from Connecticut, but we are a million of people and more; we are a part of New England, though it seems to be forgotten over offices, and I really think it would be a good thing all around if Connecticut were recognized in some rather conspicuous way, all of which leads up to the suggestion that Mr. Lynde Harrison of New Haven, would, I think, be a very capable and accomplished foreign minister. He is a lawyer of sufficient fortune so that he does not care to continue practice. He is well informed both as to our own government and our foreign relations. I need not go on praising him, because I can say it all in a word—I think he is peculiarly well qualified for such a position. I would trust him in the most difficult one that could be selected. I hope the time may come when it can be brought about.

This was the last letter which he addressed to the President. The appointment could not be made.

CHAPTER XLI

CONNECTICUT'S FIRST CITIZEN

Successive Elections to Senate without Opposition—Lack of Personal Organization—Offer of Position as Chief-Justice of Supreme Court of Errors—Rejects Suggestion of Selection as President *pro tem.*

"ALL the politics of Connecticut," Mr. Platt once observed grimly, "seems to depend on which is going to die first, Hawley or I." The remark disclosed a humorous insight into a situation creditable alike to Senators and State. It is true there were those who would gladly have represented the State in the Senate, but so great was the regard for Platt that no one ever ventured to carry into the Legislature a contest for his place, and though Hawley had a harder time of it, the State always rallied to his support. When he first entered the Senate Mr. Platt laid down a rule that so long as he remained there he would not meddle with the internal politics of Connecticut. He had an idea that he could best please the people of the State by serving them to the limit of his ability in Washington without bothering about political rivalries at home, and so he scrupulously abstained from anything which might lead to a suspicion that he was trying to interfere with local affairs. After entering the Senate he never asked for a State appointment or attempted to influence the State officers who had appointments to make. He carried this feeling even to the length of

keeping hands off when his own re-elections were pending; and it may be doubted whether in any other State a United States Senator through so many years ever succeeded in holding his seat continuously for so long a time with less attention to the details of party management. It is true that from time to time some of those who looked ahead to remote contingencies were suspected of quietly laying their plans, and Mr. Platt had a few friends at home who, watching developments at close range, kept him fairly well informed of what was going on, but true to his character, throughout his long career, he would not permit himself to be seriously disturbed by unfavorable rumors. There was never a time from the hour of his first nomination when he would not have accepted with philosophy his retirement from public life. Once, indeed, he was on the point of retiring of his own volition. This was in the third year of his service. He had been seriously ill and had been obliged to submit to an operation; his wife was an invalid, and his financial affairs were sadly demoralized, as a result of debts incurred through the failure of the cutlery enterprise at Meriden. He had not yet attained to a position of great influence in Washington, and he was tormented with anxiety as to whether he could bear up under the burden of expense. He wrote to one or two intimates in Meriden telling them of his wish to resign, not with a view, apparently, of asking their advice, but simply that they might be forewarned of what was to come. It was only after strong urging from them that he was induced to reconsider his determination and continue until the end of his term. By that time his mood had undergone a change; he had become more firmly grounded in his position; he was assured of the undivided support of his State,

and he accepted with gratitude the unanimous nomination which the Republican caucus gave him. Thenceforward, while he sometimes expressed a longing for the freedom and easier conditions of private life, he realized that he had found his life's work in the Senate. In 1888, in 1892, and again in 1896, there were intimations in influential quarters that he would be an acceptable candidate for President, but he did not let himself be deluded into considering such a remote contingency, any more than he was tempted by the bait of the Vice-Presidency which was also dangled before his eyes. In 1889, while he was serving his second term, the office of Chief-Justice of the Supreme Court of Errors of Connecticut became vacant and Governor Bulkeley offered him the place, which after a few days' consideration he declined.[1]

After the election of 1890, which resulted disastrously to the Republican cause throughout the United States, it was found that the Connecticut Legislature remained Republican by a bare majority. As Mr. Platt's second term was to expire on March 4, 1891, there was more or less conjecture as to whether his chances of re-election would be affected by the narrow party margin.

[1] His letter of declination to Governor Bulkeley was dated March 9, 1889:

"When in Washington recently you wished to know whether I would entertain favorably the suggestion that you might desire to nominate me to the office of Chief-Justice of the Supreme Court of Errors, and I asked a few days in which to consider the matter. I have given the matter much careful thought, and my conclusion is that it would be unwise to accept the position; and in this decision I am supported by the opinion of the few friends to whom I feel at liberty to speak.

"I assure you I am not insensible of the high honor which would be conferred by the appointment, and I shall always fully appreciate the compliment of being thought worthy to receive it."

There was nothing very definite in the talk, but it attracted the attention of his friends. After election he went to Washington for a few days, from whence, in the excess of caution, on November 11th, he wrote to John R. Buck:

Before I came away I heard a good deal of talk from Democratic sources to the effect that I could not be re-elected in this Legislature. Loomis, who makes his headquarters at the Murray Hill Hotel, said so, very positively, to General Hawley. I saw it in an article in the New Haven *Register*, and a number of Democrats in New Haven have said in a mysterious way that it might be a Republican, but it would not be Platt. Whether there is enough of this smoke to indicate a fire anywhere, I do not know. I have not been able to run it down to any definite conclusion. Some say that there are Republicans elected who are my enemies and will not vote for me. I do not know of any such. Others say that the liquor dealers control certain Republicans in the Legislature, and that they do not want me. Others say that Sam Fessenden controls a few votes, and that they will stand out till the rest of the party goes to Fessenden. I am satisfied that there is nothing to this latter story.

But it occurs to me that you, being intimate with Fred Brown and George Sumner, and Cleveland, might find out what it is that these Democrats appear to be basing their hopes on. Of course, the situation—three or four or six majority—suggests possibilities, but I cannot discover where they are and should like to get at what it is the Democrats are thinking about.

A month later, on December 8, 1890, he takes up the question again in a letter to Henry T. Blake of New Haven:

You speak of the present emergency in the senatorial question. There is none as far as I am concerned. If the

Republicans in the Legislature desire some other person than me for Senator, there will be no more happy man in the State than I; and if any Republicans are false enough to the party to join with the Democrats in determining who the Senator shall be, it will trouble other Republicans in the State a great deal more than it will me. I am weary of the life here, and but for the fact that the unity of the party depends upon my being a candidate for re-election I should be out of it.

This was as near as even rumor came to displacing Mr. Platt until the day of his death, save only on one occasion. But it was inevitable that rumor should once in a while suggest possibilities. That he was not asleep to these is shown in a letter which he wrote to Samuel Fessenden on January 25, 1893:

I do not suppose that you are responsible for any of the statements that appear in newspapers relating to the senatorship. But I saw in the Bridgeport *Farmer* an article which purports to be an expression of your views by one of your most intimate friends, in which he says, after speaking of the fact that the reason for your refusal to be a candidate was that you wanted to make more money before you became one, "that four years from now Senator Platt's term expires. By that time Mr. Fessenden will be virtually independent of a Senator's salary. I know as an absolute fact that Senator Platt is pledged to him, and, if the Legislature is at that time Republican, Sam Fessenden will be next Senator from this State." Of course, it is unnecessary for me to say that I have made no pledges whatever, but I do not wish to let a statement of that sort, which comes under my observation, go without any notice from me. It is better to speak of it when I see it than to leave any opportunity for misunderstandings in the future.

It was during this period of his career that he was called upon to make a decision which he believed would have an important effect upon his political future. The Democratic majority in the Senate had been wiped out by the elections of 1894 and the Senate was to be reorganized on a Republican basis in the session of 1895–6. Senator Manderson of Nebraska who had been President *pro tem* prior to the period of Democratic supremacy was about to leave public life and it was necessary to make a new selection. The names considered for the place were those of three New England veterans: Platt, Hoar, and Frye. Had the Connecticut Senator cared for the position he would undoubtedly have been chosen, as he was regarded with especial favor by the western men who held the balance of power; but, while the office carried a certain prestige, his ambition did not lie that way. He was in line for the Finance Committee—a designation which it might require some effort to secure, but which would give him the opportunity to participate in framing a protective tariff in the event of complete Republican success the following year. On June 24, 1895, he wrote from Meriden to John H. Flagg:

I note what you say about being elected President *pro tempore* of the Senate, but I think you have forgotten what I want, and that is to go on the Finance Committee. I should care nothing for being President *pro tempore*, but should care very much for a place on the Finance Committee. I know I could easily be elected President *pro tempore*, and I know I cannot easily get on the Finance Committee. The people of the State of Connecticut would take no interest or very little interest in my getting the former, but would see the necessity of continuing me in the Senate if I could get the latter. Dubois and Hansbrough and Petti-

grew want to get rid of me on the Indian and Territorial Committees. Hence their willingness and anxiety to make me President *pro tempore*, but I have told them what I want, and though they are silver men, they are disposed to help me on to the Finance Committee. They love me well enough, perhaps, but what they want is a clear track for Pettigrew to be Chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs, Hansbrough Chairman of the Committee on Territories, and Dubois Chairman of the Committee on Public Lands, which he can have if Pettigrew gets the Chairmanship of Indian Affairs. This is the situation, and I am inclined to think it is such that I may get the Finance Committee, although it would make three on it from New England. At any rate I don't want to be President *pro tempore* in any event.

He adhered to this determination, even though other Republican Senators assured him that they saw no reason why he should not have both places.

CHAPTER XLII

THE FESSENDEN EPISODE

An Evanescent Disturbance—Proposed for Vice-President—Refuses to Make a Personal Canvass for Re-election—Election in 1897—Political Expenditures.

HOWEVER little temptation there may have been in the proposal to make him President *pro tem*, Mr. Platt was up against a somewhat more serious embarrassment in 1896, through a suggestion that he be placed on the ticket with McKinley in the event of McKinley's nomination for President. No public man was ever more free from the weaknesses of political ambition, and therefore no man was ever less likely to be beguiled by intimations which to others might have proved seductive. He never cherished the slightest inclination toward the vice-presidency, and so there was no taint of personal vanity to interfere with a clear perception of the motives underlying the suggestion of his name. He recognized it first as a part of the tactics of the friends of Mr. McKinley to weaken the support of Mr. Reed in New England, and second as a clever diversion for the politicians of his own State who would have welcomed the vacant Senate seat resulting from so distinguished a compliment. It happened that this mild exploitation of the chances for a Connecticut vice-president was coincident with the only tangible movement which was ever made within

the party in behalf of another aspirant for Mr. Platt's seat in the Senate—a movement which was doomed to a brief existence but which while it continued caused considerable annoyance. It was the only time in his career when the Senator came to the point of seriously considering an organization among his friends to safeguard his political interests. The State Convention to select delegates to the Republican National Convention was held in the spring of 1896, and Mr. Platt's third term as Senator was to expire on March 4, 1897. Even before the meeting of the spring convention, there began to spread an understanding that Samuel Fessenden, the Connecticut member of the Republican National Committee, would be a formidable factor in an approaching contest for the senatorship. Mr. Fessenden was entrusted with the management of Reed's canvass in Connecticut. Mr. Platt, while personally inclined toward Reed, had scrupulously refrained, according to his custom, from influencing the choice of delegates. John Addison Porter, afterwards the President's secretary, through his newspaper, the Hartford *Post*, was ardently urging the nomination of McKinley. The question of the presidency was involved in a measure with that of the senatorship. Through the winter intimations of the activity of Fessenden's supporters kept coming to Platt. He began at last to show signs of interest. On March 16, 1896 he wrote to H. Wales Lines:

I hear of a good many places in which Mr. Fessenden's friends are trying to select candidates to be nominated for the Senate and House of Representatives. . . . It is a little difficult to know just what I ought to be doing or my friends for me, in view of the aggressive work which the Fessenden men have taken up. I do not think they

are meeting with the encouragement which they expected, and yet they are ploughing around as best they can. There is a meeting of the State Committee next Wednesday evening, I think, to determine when the convention to nominate delegates to St. Louis is to be held in Connecticut. I should like to be a mouse in the wall at that meeting, for I think there will be indications of what the crowd think of the situation.

Early in February we find him writing to his old friend, John R. Buck of Hartford:

I judge that the political pot boils a little more than of late in Connecticut on account of the selection of delegates to St. Louis. I am not trying to nominate a President, and if I were a delegate to the convention, I do not know at this moment what I would do. But I do hear various rumors of an effort on the part of Fessenden to control the selection of delegates and to be able to cast the vote of Connecticut in conjunction with that of New York and Pennsylvania under the lead of Platt and Quay. I don't place much dependence on that, for I don't believe that any one can name delegates in Connecticut and get them. But as I say, I am not mixing or meddling with this matter.

With all the spread of rumor and suspicion he did not feel free to absent himself from Washington during the session of Congress, and besides he had certain scruples against even an appearance of canvassing for his own re-election. To an invitation to speak at Danbury he responded on March 12th, in a letter to C. H. Merritt of that town:

I don't want to come to Danbury in a way in which any one could say that I was electioneering for myself. I can't do that. I never have and I am not going to begin

now. Just the way I feel about the matter of re-election is this. If the people of the State, by which I mean the Republican people, want me to serve another term I shall be very thankful and glad. If they want some one else rather than me, I should try to accept their verdict as philosophically as might be. My own belief about it is, and I think I may say so without being charged with egotism, that a very large proportion of the Republican voters in Connecticut wish me to be returned. If that is so, I want their wishes to find expression and not to be thwarted by any kind of political wire-pulling. I feel a certain degree of assurance that if the people who want me to come back take sufficient interest in it to let their wishes be reflected in the election of members of the Legislature, there will not be much of a contest. The only thing that I fear is that they may feel as if there was no occasion to do or say very much, expecting the matter will come out all right anyway. I can't make a personal campaign of it. I must do the best I can here and elsewhere for the party and State and leave the matter pretty much to the people to say what they want. If I do this I shall meet the result with a feeling of self-respect which I should not have if I went into a political scramble in the State to secure the nomination and election of representatives who were favorable to me. I think you can appreciate my feelings in this respect.

A few days later he wrote to John H. Flagg:

Mr. Fessenden's particular friends are beginning to inaugurate quite an active campaign, laying plans already to nominate in the different towns and senatorial districts men upon whom they think they can rely to be friendly to Mr. Fessenden, and I suppose that at present there is nothing for me to do but to let that sort of thing go on. I can't stop it, and I know of no way to meet it actively. If the sentiment in my favor is really earnest and pronounced, it seems as if it would assert itself in caucuses and

conventions, and bring the Fessenden plans to naught. If it is a languid feeling or kind of limited endorsement sort of a thing, the active wire-pulling may overcome it. At any rate I can only sit by and watch and wait. . . . I have settled down to the conviction and conclusion that from now on until the question comes of my election in the Legislature it will be the same thing. No active organization in my behalf, a very active organization on the part of Mr. Fessenden and his friends, the whole thing depending on whether they can override public sentiment or not.

That he was watching closely the developments of affairs at home, however, is shown by his correspondence. To John R. Buck of Hartford he wrote, on March 16th, a letter which betrayed an intelligent understanding of the drift:

I am anxious to know whether you yourself want to go to the St. Louis Convention. If you do, I want to have you, though I don't know anything what your views are about who ought to be nominated, but it would not make any difference if I did, because I do want some one to go to the Convention from Connecticut who will have as much influence and strength with the delegation as you would be sure to have. I don't want the enemy, Fessenden, that is, to have complete control of the Connecticut vote at St. Louis. Not that I think he is going to have, but I cannot bear this talk that Quay controls the vote of Pennsylvania, Platt controls the vote of New York, and Fessenden controls the vote of Connecticut. I see it more and more until I am sick at heart, and am not really in condition to swear very much about it. I know just as well as I know anything that, unless Reed can make the nomination, there will be an attempt made by Fessenden to bring me out for the vice-presidency. No one knows how this nomination is going to turn, but if it does go to a western man, he will try to play that game,

and his relations with Platt and Quay are close enough to make it dangerous. I want some one in that delegation who can speak for me and speak loud if occasion demands it.

I find that the Fessenden pushers are pretty vigorous and somewhat aggressive but are meeting with rebuff and refusal in quarters they did not expect. . . . You know how philosophically I am sitting here and how philosophically I will sit by my hearthstone in the Adirondacks if I can get away from here. Still I like to hear what is going on.

It was at this stage of the proceedings that the Hartford *Post* published an editorial voicing the casual expressions through the State that Mr. Platt would make an admirable Vice-President and calling upon the Republicans of Connecticut to work to that end. Mr. Platt perceived immediately the real purpose of the proposal. He wrote to his son James on March 30th, enclosing the editorial:

Did you see this? The question is what to do about it—how it can best be nipped in the bud. I think you can tell Tom Warnock to say something in his paper to-morrow to the effect that I would not be a candidate for Vice-President under any circumstances and that the Republicans of the State are not to be diverted from their determination to run me for the Senate by any such suggestion. That is about the way I think I should put it, but you will be the judge. There is a lot of that thing going on around the State. I cannot deny it by saying to the New York papers, to the *Courant*, and other such papers that I am not and will not be a candidate, but you can say it.

The Hartford *Courant* promptly responded to the editorial of the *Post*, and other newspapers also handled the question in the same way. To Charles Hopkins

Clark, editor of the *Courant*, Mr. Platt wrote on March 31st:

I am very much obliged for the article in the *Courant* of yesterday morning and for the way in which you treated the embarrassing suggestion of the *Post*. I have been aware of a proposed movement to bring me out as a candidate for Vice-President for some time, but thought that it would probably come at the time of the convention in case a western man should be nominated.

Two classes of people have been at work at it: The Fessenden men, in his interest solely, and the McKinley men, with the idea that it might help to get a McKinley delegation. An embarrassing feature of it has been that so many of my warm friends look at it as if such a possibility would confer additional honor upon me.

I think you treated the matter admirably, and I want you to know how much I appreciate it.

On the same day he wrote to H. Wales Lines, going a little more closely into the political history of the day:

From this distance I can't see whether things are working well or ill for me. This Vice-President business has been a very shrewdly contrived idea for some time, and has been worked for all it is worth. . . . Of course it is engineered by the Fessenden men, and Porter's object in it was not so much to help Fessenden as to help McKinley, and the unpleasant thing about it, after all, is that a good many people who are good friends of mine can't understand but that it would be a very welcome thing to me if I could be nominated for Vice-President. That is the matter which has troubled me. I have had to talk and write to people who are almost as enthusiastic friends of mine as you are to convince them that it would not be a great thing if I could be nominated for that office. The Hartford *Post*

article embarrasses me pretty badly here. . . . Reed understands Fessenden and his movements pretty well. But at the same time he became very much alarmed and did not understand how such a thing could be done without my consent. He wanted me to say, myself, through the newspapers that I was not a candidate for Vice-President, and that I wanted to be returned to the Senate and that was all I wanted. Charlie Russell thought I had better do it for the reason that while eastern Connecticut is solid for me this talk about nominating me for Vice-President had gone through that section of the State and that even my friends thought it would be a great thing. I telegraphed James yesterday to know what he thought about it, and he said No, which was my judgment all the while as I told Russell. . . . It would seem as if the performance was pretty thoroughly exposed. At the same time you can see how nervous Reed would be and is, and it is not easy to satisfy him that I ought not to say something myself.

To Charles W. Pickett, an editor of the New Haven *Leader*, he wrote on April 1, 1896:

Of course you know just how I feel about the senatorship. If the people of Connecticut are willing to do me further honor I hope they will re-elect me Senator. That would be very gratifying to me. I do not desire any other office. I have made no personal effort looking toward a re-election. I must leave that to the judgment of the Republicans of Connecticut. It may possibly seem singular to you, but I should not respect myself if I attempted to make a campaign organization for the purpose of securing a re-election. I was reading only last evening the biography of a public man of whom the author said: "He never condescended to the despicable pursuit of self-advertisement," and I thought that I would rather have that said of me when I am gone than to secure any public honor by resorting to the methods and means which politicians sometimes adopt to secure

success. I don't mean by this that I don't appreciate everything that is said or done in my behalf by those who think that I ought to be re-elected. I assure you that I do appreciate such support more perhaps than a man would who was trying to re-elect himself.

With regard to Mr. Fessenden I have no quarrel with him, nor indeed, a controversy. I have been pleased in that so far as the matter has been talked about I have not heard that he or his friends have said any unkind things about me. And I certainly would have no feeling of unkindness towards him or towards those who would like to advance his interests. I have never quite thought that he was dead in earnest about desiring to secure the place I now occupy. Some things made me think that his present ambition lies rather in another direction.

The canvass was not altogether free from personal criticism. One report had it that Mr. Platt was guilty of nepotism, and that he had used his position to secure the appointment of relatives and personal friends to office. To a New Britain correspondent who informed him of this report, he wrote on April 9th:

A man must be pretty hard pushed to make the objection to me that I put relatives or even friends in office. So far as I know there is but one person in office in the United States who is a relative of mine. The enrolling clerk of the Senate is a second cousin, but was appointed specially on the ground of his capacity for that particular place, upon the recommendation of the Senators from New York, he being a resident of Albany. I think that I can say that I have never recommended the appointment of a man to office from whose appointment I expected to derive the slightest personal advantage. I am making and shall make no canvass or contest to be returned to the Senate again, yet I confess I should like to be. It would be extremely gratifying to me to have another term, but the

matter must take care of itself. . . . I could not respect myself if I resorted to the methods so common at the present day to secure re-election. . . . Taking the State by and large, I think that there is quite a decided feeling that I ought to be returned. If such should be the result, I should be, as I have said, very thankful. If not I shall try to acquiesce with what philosophy I may be able to muster.

The sentiment for Platt's return was so pronounced that the Fessenden agitation subsided rapidly after the meeting of the State Convention, and by the end of May there was so little anxiety among Mr. Platt's friends, that he had begun to regard the earlier rumors as exaggerations. In the last week of May, writing to his friend, John Coe, who was having an outing in London, he said he was not worrying about it. "If they don't send me back here, you and I will set up a partnership and see how well we can enjoy ourselves, and I should like that quite as well as being in the Senate."

But there was never really any cause for any one to worry. As soon as it became known that another name had been suggested there was such an expression of opinion in favor of continuing him in the service that all doubt of the choice of the State was removed on the spot. Mr. Fessenden was informed pointedly that he had better get out of the way, and he concluded to defer his ambitions till a more favorable opportunity. In July the Senator wrote to Isaac H. Bromley of the New York *Tribune:*

The whole situation seems to have been absolutely cleared up and every one, even Mr. Fessenden's friends, to be happy over the prospect of my return to the Senate

without opposition. That it is gratifying to me goes without saying, though I realize the fact that when the years creep on a man as on you and me the natural thing is for the procession to pass by; but I hope that I may have vigor and strength both of body and mind to do effective work for some years to come.

When the Legislature convened in the following January, Mr. Platt was renominated as usual by acclamation, and duly elected without the expenditure of effort or money.[1]

[1] In January, 1897, Senator Platt made the following affidavit of expenses incurred by him: "The undersigned, Orville H. Platt of Meriden, Connecticut, having been on Wednesday, January 20, 1897, declared elected to the Senate of the United States from the State of Connecticut, for the term of six years, commencing March 4, 1897, makes this affidavit in compliance with Section 2 of the act entitled: 'An act to punish corrupt practices at elections,' approved July ninth, eighteen hundred and ninety-five. Whether the section in question requires a statement giving the disbursements, expenses, and contributions in the campaign resulting in the election of Senators and Representatives, the undersigned is in doubt and therefore covers both periods.

"During the campaign resulting in the election of Senators and Representatives to the Legislature I was under no expense, made no disbursements or contributions, except that as I was engaged in delivering addresses in different parts of the State I paid my personal expenses in travelling and staying at hotels. Of these expenses I kept no memorandum and can only say that they did not exceed the sum of one hundred dollars ($100.00). I have been at no expense, have made no disbursements or contributions whatever since the election of Senators and Representatives up to and including the time of my election.

"Dated at Washington, D. C., January 27, 1897."

It could never be truthfully charged that Mr. Platt's successive elections to the Senate were accompanied with an undue expenditure of money. It is doubtful whether from first to last the entire cost was as much as might reasonably be expended in a single campaign for a minor elective office. After the election of 1903, H. Wales Lines who had in charge the finances of the original canvass in 1879, wrote him:

"Recently I found some memorandums which I made in January

His most memorable service was yet to come.

1879, from which I pick out a few that may be of interest. I find there a record of a cash contribution by Charles Parker of $200 and I. C. Lewis of $225 for expenses of the canvass; besides a memorandum of a number of different men who paid their own expenses as they went to other towns seeking to interest men in the support of you for Senator. One of the items of expense seems to have been $2 for the rent of Armory Hall for a reception. Receptions cost more nowadays. I think this must have been held with no cards, no music, and no flowers."

When his name was first brought forward in 1878, a friend in a distant State wrote offering financial aid, only to receive the reply: "Don't care for a cent from anybody. If I am elected it will be because I am wanted."

CHAPTER XLIII

A STATE'S CROWNING TRIBUTE

Election in 1903—Address to Legislature—A Senator's Duty—Reception by the State at Hartford.

COMING at the close of six historic years, Senator Platt's entrance upon a fifth successive term was like a coronation. For the first time Connecticut had the opportunity to pay so striking a compliment to one of her sons, and the people whose credit he had held high in Washington for a quarter of a century vied in doing honor. Valuable as his service had been hitherto he had not yet come before them clothed with so much distinction, for the term just coming to an end had given him a prestige which had attached to no other Connecticut representative in the nation's councils since the day of Roger Sherman. The election itself was a matter of form. The Republican caucus as usual made the nomination by acclamation, and the General Assembly went through the required ceremony of a ballot in which Mr. Platt received 169 out of 170 Republican votes, a tobacco farmer from Barkhamsted happily selecting this opportunity to express his dissatisfaction with the course of the Senator with regard to Cuban reciprocity.

Mr. Platt was in Hartford, having come on from Washington on the announcement of his nomination, and after the ballot had been declared he appeared

before the joint convention which rose to greet him, remaining standing until he had taken his seat. He was deeply moved as he began to speak:

> I desire through you Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, and you gentlemen who constitute the General Assembly, to say to the people of Connecticut in homely, heartfelt, Anglo-Saxon phrase, I thank you. Through these words the heart speaks as it can through no other. No adjective can add to their meaning, no other words can be more expressive of my emotion. If repetition could emphasize them, I would say again and again—I thank you.

He spoke of the twenty-four years during which he had been a representative of the State of Connecticut in the Senate of the United States, a period covering years of such marvellous national progress and development "that we may without boasting, say that the body of which you have constituted me a member surpasses in dignity, in responsibility, and in its influence upon the destinies of mankind, any legislative body in the world." He did not attribute his great honor solely to any personal achievement. He believed that in the enjoyment of this long continued confidence he had been favored by conditions and circumstances which had not so favorably affected his predecessors. He had followed in the footsteps of able, forceful, and great Senators whose term of service had been shortened by death or changed political conditions, Senators who had made a State of limited area and resources respected and potential in national affairs, men who had thought deeply on problems of government, who more than any others laid the foundations upon which a noble and enduring structure had been built, who had been exemplars and models for those who followed them:

To have followed such men, to have served the State in such a capacity now for twenty-four years, is an honor which I cherish above every other honor, and above all other possessions. If I have been ambitious, it fully fills the measure of that ambition, and to have been chosen for a further service of six years is an honor which far exceeds that ambition and places me under obligations which I hope I realize, but which I fear I may be unable to fully discharge.

He dwelt upon what he believed to be the true conception of a Senator's duty to his State:

A Senator in the Congress of the United States must be more than a mere representative of his State. States, like individuals, have their immediate rights and interests, but, like individuals, these rights and interests are of necessity limited by the welfare of the whole body politic, and the welfare and greater interests of the whole nation must be subserved as well as the interests and welfare of a particular State. It is by no means easy to draw the line of action between what seems to be for the advancement of a State and what seems to be for the advancement of the whole nation, but of this I am sure, that what is really and truly for the best good of the nation is most truly for the interest of a single constituent State. If the interest of the State clashes with the interest of the United States, its progress and development will be best subserved by not insisting too vigorously upon its supposed rights. I regard that phrase in the preamble of our Constitution in which one of the objects of its adoption is said to be the promotion of the general welfare as the keynote of that Constitution, and thus while a Senator should never lose sight of the interests of the State which he represents, he should always have in view the welfare, happiness, and the best interests of that great body of American citizens which constitutes the strength and glory of our nation. The individual must

sometimes forego the assertion of what he deems to be peculiarly his own right for the greater benefit of the society of which he is a part. A State must sometimes forego the assertion of its immediate right in order that the rights of all the States as they constitute the nation shall be regarded.

A true representative, whether in the State Legislature or in the National Legislature, will represent to the best of his ability the views of the constituency which elected him, and if he cannot gain the assent of the great body of representatives to his views he will gracefully and cheerfully surrender them to the views of the majority. The majority must rule.

His closing words were scriptural in their exalted dignity:

As I came to this Capitol, I looked up and saw flying over it, side by side with the national flag, the flag of our own loved State, and as I saw the three fruitful vines and read its old Latin motto I felt that more than in any other State, the armorial bearings of the flag proclaimed the faith of the fathers and still represented the faith of their descendants. If the fruited vines refer, as has been surmised, to the three original towns of Hartford, Windsor, and Wethersfield, as vines of the Lord's own planting, the faith which inscribed them on our shield and our flag has indeed been realized, for in the establishment of those towns was first proclaimed to the world, so far as I know, in a written constitution, the great doctrine of the right of the people to govern themselves, and that principle is gradually but surely possessing the earth. From the banks of our beautiful river that idea went forth conquering and to conquer. If in a wider sense the motto *Qui transtulit sustinet* refers to the whole body of the people who had fled from oppressions and persecution as the special object of the Almighty's care, that faith has indeed been justified in the wonderful Providence which has sustained and carried

on the government which may be traced to those beginnings on the banks of the Connecticut. Our shield is indeed the shield of faith, and until we depart from the faith of the fathers we may rely with confidence upon the sustaining grace and power of the Almighty. He who brought us over still sustains us.

When these formal ceremonies were over and Mr. Platt had returned to Washington, the members of the General Assembly conceived an unprecedented compliment—a reception by the State of Connecticut to Senator and Mrs. Platt in which all citizens of the State were asked to participate. It was like the Senator to stipulate that the plans be simple. He even asked the committee which visited Washington to confer with him that it should be announced that evening dress would not be expected, so that none need feel ill at ease who might wish to attend. After the departure of the committee, he wrote to H. Wales Lines:

> Senators Cook and Paige have been down here to consult Mrs. Platt and myself about the reception, and I have said that I would leave the matter to the good judgment of the committee, suggesting only that it shall be made not too elaborate or expensive; that it should be kept simple and democratic enough so that all who wish to do so would feel free to attend. We rather fixed on the twentieth of March for it. . . . I have no doubt it will pass off nicely. I have a little bit of a dread of it, lest I should not appear just as I ought. I suppose this is born of my old country breeding, rather than society experience.

Weeks were spent in preparation for the event. Over 6500 invitations were issued to friends of the Senator inside the State and out. It was made clear also that every citizen of Connecticut would be welcome,

and there was a gathering on the night of March 20th, which was the most memorable social function in the history of the State. Special trains brought to Hartford citizens of every county, and over 10,000 people crowded into the illuminated Capitol to do honor to the first citizen of the commonwealth, one who had outlived personal envy and political rivalries. The leaders in politics, business, and the professions were on hand, and there was an outpouring of the plain people such as Hartford had never seen before. It was the most representative assemblage of the citizens of the whole State which has ever been known. For many hours the multitude passed before Mr. and Mrs. Platt, while there arose from all over Connecticut and even beyond its borders a chorus of praise. Messages of congratulation came from the highest officials at Washington. A type of these was that from Senator Beveridge of Indiana:

I admire Senator Platt more than any man in public life. He is regarded among us in the Senate as our greatest constructive statesman. In my State of Indiana he has long been the ideal of American public life. I doubt if the utterances of any man have equal weight with the American people when he sees fit to present his views on any public question.

Said the Hartford *Courant:*

We are not at all sure that Mr. Platt knows even yet, after all these years, the real width, depth, and warmth of his State's liking for him. He will get additional light on the subject before bedtime.

His visit to Hartford last fall was political. He came to take the chair in a party convention. The errand that brings him to the old capital city to-day is of a different

and more genial nature. He is the honored and beloved guest of the State—of all the people of the State. There 's no politics in this welcome; the bugles have sung truce. We are not Republicans and Democrats to-day; we are Connecticut folks trying to make Mr. Platt of Connecticut (as the official reporters of the Senate call him) understand how proud we all are of our right and title in him. . . .

Meriden has had a good citizen in him for fifty years and two. He has obeyed every order of duty; a soldier could do no more. He was diligent in the service of his town before he was called into the service of his State. From his first year in the chamber a conscientious, hard-working, painstaking Senator, he has grown and broadened and ripened into a leading Senator—great in influence, great in usefulness. His name is spoken with respect in distant States. Yet at home he is still the unfrilled Connecticut man, interested in local affairs, a friendly neighbor among neighbors, seeking and enjoying

> "the talk
> Man holds with week-day man in the hourly walk
> Of the mind's business."

Your free-spoken admirer in the White House is right, Senator Platt. You are, as he forcibly says, a "Bully Old Boy." Hartford is glad to have you here on this twentieth day of March, 1903; the legislators, state officers, judges, reverend clergy, learned physicians, poor but honest lawyers, and plain people won't do a thing to you.

The words of the New Haven *Leader* were characteristic of many others:

Last night's great reception was unique and without precedent in New England history. Never before has any public man or private citizen received such a distinctively personal tribute.

Well may Senator Platt feel proud of the honor done

him, and prouder still are the people of Connecticut that they have one whom they can justly accord the highest tributes of respect they are capable of expressing.

It was expected that the reception would be a big one, but nobody anticipated such a pilgrimage to the capital city as last night taxed the railroads to the last available car of carrying capacity, and thronged the Capitol building with countless hundreds who came just to say, "I am heartily glad to see you, Senator, friend, and faithful public servant—ORVILLE H. PLATT."

Truly it may be said of Orville H. Platt: This man was born for the public good.

A few days after his return to Washington, weary but rejoicing, he wrote to Senator Charles C. Cook, Chairman of the Reception Committee:

I have had no real opportunity until now to express through you and your committee, to the Governor, State officers, and the Legislature, my deep appreciation of the honor conferred upon Mrs. Platt and myself by the splendid and enthusiastic reception given us at the Capitol on the twentieth of March. To be honored by the representatives of the good State of Connecticut, and by its people with so much unanimity, heartiness, and sincerity, touched my heart as nothing else could have done. It seemed to evidence the fact that by years of service I had succeeded in winning the confidence, respect, and esteem of my fellow citizens, than which nothing could more fully satisfy or please me. To have served the State of Connecticut as best I might for twenty-four years in the Senate of the United States, and to have been honored by election for another term of six years, is indeed something of which to be justly proud; but to have been made to feel by such a reception that the people of the State trusted me and manifested toward me real affection, more than satisfies and gratifies me. I love Connecticut and its people. It has

been a pleasure to represent and to serve the State, and that its people seem to love me, more than fills the measure of my highest ambition. I cannot in language express my sense of obligation, but I shall carry with me to my last hour, the feeling that I have been most highly honored.

CHAPTER XLIV

FRUITFUL YEARS

The Last Phase—Ratification of Colombian Treaty—The Adirondacks—Special Session of 1903—Pension Order 78—Post-Office Scandals—Death of Mark Hanna—Nomination and Election of Roosevelt, 1904.

BEGIRT with the affection of the people of his State, the aged Senator approached the end of his career. The short time he had remaining was to be the richest and ripest period of his life, filled to the brim with achievement and honor. The special session of the Senate called in the spring of 1903 to consider the treaty with Colombia and the Cuban reciprocity treaty passed without incident. Both treaties were ratified, a condition being attached to the one with Cuba that it should not become effective without action by Congress. But the confinement of the session following the labors of the preceding winter had left the Senator in a bad way. He was more weary than he had realized, and he had no sooner reached Judea after the adjournment of the Senate than he was seized with an attack of acute indigestion similar to those from which he had suffered before, but more exhausting in its effects. His family and friends were alarmed by his condition and recognizing the inadequacy of ordinary remedies they hurried him north to the Adirondacks, the only place where he could hope to find relief. He

went early in June accompanied by Mrs. Platt and by Dr. Ford, his family physician. That trip to the Adirondacks undoubtedly prolonged his life, and when he returned to Connecticut six weeks later he was quite his old self, ready to attack the mass of work which had been accumulating. A few days at Kirby Corner and he was off with Mrs. Platt to Senator Aldrich's summer home at Warwick to meet Aldrich, Allison, and Spooner, a subcommittee entrusted with the consideration of financial legislation; for since the pigeonholing of the Aldrich bill by Congress the world of business had been praying for speedy relief. The four elder statesmen remained at Warwick several days talking over not only financial measures but also other questions which were likely to come before Congress. President Roosevelt had given it out that he intended to call an extraordinary session to meet immediately after the November elections so as to enact a bill carrying the Cuban reciprocity treaty into effect before the movement of the sugar crop in December. Mr. Platt was impressed with the idea that the session ought to be called earlier, if it were called at all, and he brought his associates to the same way of thinking. He felt that the financial question having overshadowed the Cuban question in the eyes of the business community, it was just as essential to hasten action on one as on the other. After the meeting dissolved he took the matter up with the President and with others. To Mark Hanna he wrote:

> We would do no more and accomplish nothing any earlier by having a session begin November 9th than if we had no extra session. We have to organize committees in the Senate and in the House; that would take probably all of November, and then we should be dawdling along through December until the Christmas recess without having

THE LAST CAMP IN THE ADIRONDACKS, 1904, AT LONG LAKE

arrived at anything in the way of legislation. If we could start by the fifteenth of October we might pass something both in relation to the Cuban treaty and financial matters. I confess I doubt it, but the early date gives us a chance, and I think the later one gives us no chance whatever. . . . I write this to you because I know that you will feel that it is a personal inconvenience, but you are Chairman of the National Committee, and we must get this financial subject out of the way as early as possible. If we do not get it out of the way before the regular session, the Democrats will delay it and organize their campaign in opposition to it, keeping us discussing it until it will not come in time to do any good to the business interests of the country; it will precipitate a discussion of the only thing that they have for an issue, viz.: their allegations that the Republican party has but one object, and that is to promote the interests of Wall Street and the national banks.

Hanna was having a hard fight at home "from foes without and within" and was not favorably inclined to an earlier meeting. He thought the introduction and consideration of a financial bill at the time of greatest activity might arouse a discussion which would create speculation as to the result and very seriously interfere with business, while as for the Cuban bill, if it could not be passed in the sixty days after the 1st of November, he did not believe it could be passed at all. "With due deference to your *great age*, experience, and judgment," he wrote whimsically, "I submit these observations for your consideration." This epistolary passage with the Ohio Senator was an episode in an intimate correspondence which had been going on all summer and which continued after Mr. Platt's return from his fishing club in Canada whither he went for a fortnight's outing at the conclusion of the Warwick meeting. Hanna was carrying on his fight

for re-election under the handicap of what proved to be his fatal illness. "I was very sorry to hear that you had an attack which necessitated your physician prescribing a period of rest for you and yet was not surprised," wrote Platt early in September. "I do not know what this thing,which in these days we call 'acute indigestion,' is but I know that I had a twitch of it which was hard to recover from":

I am intensely interested in your campaign. It does not seem possible that they can defeat your re-election but

> "For ways that are dark
> And for tricks that are vain
> The Heathen Chinee is peculiar."

Dick has written me asking me to speak in your campaign. I would do it more gladly for you than for any man in the United States, but really I cannot risk it. I am seventy-six years old, and cannot endure the fatigue and labor of a campaign. After my warning of last spring I think I should break down under it.

It was well that he spared himself and lived so much in the open air of the Adirondacks and Canada that summer; for he was kept busy enough during the fall and winter and was subject to a strain which might have tested the powers of a much younger man. Washington was beginning to buzz with the preliminaries of the Presidential campaign of 1904, and Mr. Platt was one of the first to spring to the support of President Roosevelt, even at the risk of seeming unfaithful to his friend Mark Hanna. The Republican National Committee was called to meet in Washington early in December, and it was expected that the meeting would develop whatever opposition there might be to Roosevelt's nomination. A day or two before the time set

for the meeting Mr. Platt announced himself in an interview as favoring the President's nomination, and he went so far as to declare that no other Republican could be elected. Throughout the winter he was the President's right arm at the Capitol, dealing stout blows in defence of the administration. The Panama revolution came in the fall, and when the Senate took it up he delivered an exhaustive speech in support of the way in which the President had handled it. He worked hard to get an early vote on the Cuban reciprocity bill. Mischievous Chinese legislation was introduced which would have alienated China at a critical time. He prevented the Senate from acting on it. An extravagant Pension bill was proposed, and Congress was in danger of being swept off its feet. Mr. Platt was conversant with the question. At one time he had been a member of the Pensions Committee and its Acting Chairman. He deprecated the enactment of such far-reaching legislation, and he was one of those who advised the President to issue an executive order fixing at sixty-two years the age at which pensionable disability to the extent of six dollars a month should be assumed, thus appeasing the desire for liberal treatment of the survivors of the war while preventing a more serious raid on the treasury. When Pension Order 78 became the target for Democratic batteries as the most notorious instance of executive encroachment upon the authority of Congress, he came to the defence of the administration, pointing out that Roosevelt had merely followed the example set by Cleveland in fixing the age for presumptive total disability at seventy-five and of McKinley in fixing at sixty-five the age at which half disability should be presumed. The thieving which had been going on in the Post-Office Department

for years came to light during the spring and summer of 1903. Mr. Platt was deeply interested in the developments, for he had long suspected crooked practices there. Postmaster-General Payne was his personal friend, and the appointment of First Assistant Postmaster-General Wynne, who instigated the inquiry, had been due primarily to his suggestion. After it was all over and the culprits on their way to the penitentiary the Democratic leaders awoke to the necessity of a dragnet investigation by Congress so as to keep the scandal alive through the campaign. Mr. Platt, who was as familiar with all the circumstances as any one else at the Capitol, perceived the disingenuousness of this demand and begged the President not to yield to it; but the agitation was persisted in all through the winter of 1903–4 and on April 14th, in order that there might be no misunderstanding of his position he sent this note to the White House:

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

I would like you to know that I have not in the slightest degree changed my mind as to the inadvisability of *any* sort of a postal investigation.

Thus he was kept busy with a multiplicity of tasks through the long session. At times he wondered how long he could stand it. To Dr. Ford he wrote:

I would like to have you account for my ability to do the amount of work I am doing here in Washington and have done all this winter. If any one had told me last October or November that I would come down here and take up my labors and work steadily every day, Sundays included, from—say half-past eight or nine in the morning until ten or eleven o'clock at night, on topics which are pending before Congress, I would have said that I could not do it, yet I have done it, and presume I shall go through to

the end. Whether I shall collapse then or not, I do not know. I do know that I shall want a good long rest.

In the midst of it all came the great shock of Hanna's illness and death. This happened in the house in which the Platts were living, and the blow was as hard as if it had been in their own family. He was especially troubled that there should be so much parade and fuss about the funeral of his friend. On the morning of the ceremonies in the Senate, meditating over his cigar in his room, he suddenly asked: "If I should die here would you have one of these state funerals for me?" and when told that it would be expected he remarked: "Hope I shan't die here; hope I can go home to Connecticut for that. I should hate to be dragged around Washington in this way, and I don't want to be!"

By the time of the National Convention, he was completely worn out. Then came at Kirby Corner a renewal of the attack of the preceding year, and he hurried to the Adirondacks with Mrs. Platt for what proved to be his last sojourn there. Late in August, he came back to civilization with the tonic of the woods in his blood. He wanted more rest but he had to take up the burdens of the campaign at once. Governor McLean, who was to have presided at the Republican State Convention in Hartford on September 13th, was ill and the senior Senator was drafted for the duty. He had to set out immediately on the preparation of his address on which he took especial pains, because he felt that the State "needed some stiff bracing." It was an exhaustive effort covering every point of Democratic attack upon the administration and proved to be one of the effective documents of the campaign, but it used up a lot of energy.

He wrote to Congressman Sperry a day or two before the Convention:

I have agonized over the preparation of my speech which has gone to the printers. I am not satisfied with it. I never am when I have to prepare a speech for publication. There is no inspiration in making a speech at your desk—it is like pumping water out of a dry well. When you get up and look an audience in the face you can say something, but never mind—it will go for what it is worth, and in this matter of presiding, I am Jack-at-a-pinch anyway.

His resentment was roused by the character of the attacks made upon President Roosevelt by the Democratic candidate, and he was led into making several other speeches besides taking an unusual interest in the management of the State campaign. While the campaign was at the busiest he was called upon to deliver an address on the occasion of the 175th Anniversary of the First Congregational Church at Meriden. The address, partly historical and partly doctrinal, was out of his usual line but as he wrote to John Flagg:

It was one of the things which I could not very well refuse to do, and the way I agonized over its preparation would have amused you and excited your pity at the same time.

It is no wonder that all these things overtaxed his strength, so that when he arrived in Washington after the reaction from the November victory he was hardly in fit condition for the exacting duties before him.

CHAPTER XLV

THE LAST SESSION

Chairman of Judiciary Committee—The Swayne Impeachment—A Day's Doings—Legislation of Last Session—Opposes Heyburn Pure Food Law.

IF Mr. Platt had gone on the Judiciary Committee in 1883 when he first had the opportunity, he would have become its Chairman in the Fifty-second Congress in 1893 on the retirement of Edmunds; for he would have been the senior member then in service. When Henry M. Teller resigned from the Senate in 1882 to become Secretary of the Interior, it left a vacancy on the Committee of which Edmunds was Chairman and David Davis of Illinois the ranking Democratic member. Edmunds and Davis asked Platt to take Teller's place. It was a great compliment to him, for he was still a fledgling among his fellows and he wanted to go on the Committee. He spoke about it to Mr. Hoar who had seen a little longer service than he. The Massachusetts Senator informed him that he wanted the place himself and felt that it belonged to him on the ground of seniority if it were going to New England. So Mr. Platt explained the situation to Edmunds and Davis and withdrew in favor of Hoar, who became Chairman in due course on the retirement of Edmunds. Platt in turn succeeded to Edmunds's place as a New England member of the

Committee at a time when he would have been its Chairman but for his earlier self-sacrifice. Now Hoar was gone and the chairmanship came to Platt. He had waited many years for the distinction, and he was to enjoy it only a little while.

The last session of the Fifty-eighth Congress, brief though it was, had in it enough of interest to make any session memorable. It marked the end not only of the Congress but also of the first administration of President Roosevelt, who had just received a dazzling endorsement at the polls. For some reason the radicals in all parties seemed to expect that the administration would be marked by revolutionary demonstrations, that there would be a general onslaught on the trusts, the tariff, the railroads, and vested rights. The elder statesmen in the Senate were filled with apprehension. They had confidence in the Executive, but they feared the signs of the times and dreaded the spirit of socialism and populism run wild. Mr. Platt returned to Washington weighed down with a sense of foreboding. "The great victory in November," he wrote, "started up every fool crank in the United States and we are going to have lots of trouble." We have seen how he exerted his influence to postpone a revision of the tariff and how he discouraged the manifestation of an unreasoning campaign against the railroads and the trusts. He knew that something must be done sooner or later on all these questions, but he wanted to go slow, and he doubted whether a restraining hand could long prevail. The House was ready for anything. The Senate might be swept from its moorings by the spirit of the hour, and up to the day of final adjournment the Connecticut Senator kept looking for the first sign of weakening in the legislative foundations.

As Chairman of the Judiciary Committee and as a member of the Committee on Finance, he was in the way to impress his conservatism on his associates and on the administration, and his position was strengthened by the support he gave to the President and Secretary Hay in matters of international concern in which they were deeply interested.

As if the Senate did not have business enough to attend to in ordinary course, the House of Representatives invited further congestion by impeaching Charles Swayne, Judge of the District Court of the United States for the Northern District of Florida, of high crimes and misdemeanors in office. The charges against Swayne were petty, and there was some irritation in the Senate that the scant time at its disposal should be invaded for their consideration. Yet proceedings having been instituted, they must be treated as solemnly as if the charges were momentous and the culprit the Chief Justice of the United States. It had been many years since the Senate had sat as a high court of impeachment. The last occasion had been in the trial of Secretary Belknap in a former generation, so that the duties which fell upon the Chairman of the Judiciary Committee found him handicapped by lack of experience. Not only did Mr. Platt have to handle the preliminaries of the trial, but when the time for it came, Mr. Frye, the President *pro tempore*, begged on account of illness to be excused from the confining task of presiding over the court, and Mr. Platt was named in his stead. The Connecticut Senator might well have pleaded age and feebleness also, but with characteristic fidelity he bent his back to the burden. For over a month, in addition to all his other duties, he was obliged to preside over the wearisome deliberations of the court, to listen to the

interminable testimony and the arguments of counsel, and to pass upon questions of procedure. No one who witnessed the Senate in session during that period is likely soon to forget it. The presiding officer invested the proceedings with simple dignity, and at their conclusion an impressive picture remained in the records of the Senate. Yet all this time he was struggling with an insidious illness. Early in the trial he had been seized with an attack of grippe from which he never fully recovered. He might without criticism have quit his work in Washington altogether, but he clung to it as though it were a religious penance. Every morning he roused himself with an effort to go to the Capitol in a closed carriage, and every evening he returned to his rooms to complete the day in bed. All through it, too, he attended to the multifarious business of the Senate, carrying the while, as had been the case for years, the peculiar local business which otherwise would have fallen upon his dying colleague.

In a whimsical mood one night, resting a little after completing his work, he dictated, at his Secretary's suggestion, a partial list of the day's doings, so far as they could be recalled. It is the kind of a diary which might interest the constituents of any influential Senator:

Tuesday, January 31, 1905.

Woman from Postoffice Department came, before I had finished my breakfast, to ask me to stand back of her, etc.

Started Miss Lawler off on work which kept her busy until after two o'clock, while smoking my cigar and reading the paper.

Signed batch of letters.

Conference in parlor downstairs (Arlington) with Governor Murphy.

Interview with Mr. Harrison.

More letters.

Went to Attorney-General's office in Garvin matter, and to discuss bill allowing bench warrants issued by Federal courts to run all over the United States.

Went to State Department to get a bill, sent me in reference to naturalization, corrected—State Department blundered.

Secretary Loomis wanted to talk with me about arbitration treaties.

Hurried from there to committee room for eleven o'clock meeting on impeachment proceedings, which lasted until twelve o'clock.

Discussed arbitration with Spooner.

Dr. Wiley about appropriation to investigate leprosy.

Then to the Senate.

W— bothered me about a couple of cases before his committee.

G— about certificates of incorporation, issued to the District under the code. Got all the reports and data on that subject.

Discussed in the Senate proposition to condemn land for irrigation purposes.

Discussed other matters.

Called out three or four times by newspaper correspondents, to find out what was doing in regard to several matters.

Solberg came over from library with reference to Copyright bill; listened to him while I took my lunch.

Looked up condition of bill providing for the building of a new bridge across the Missouri River between Omaha and Council Bluffs; telegraphed Seligman and Co. in relation to same.

Crank volume came over from Speaker Cannon.

Hill with reference to various matters.

B— after me four or five times.

Went up in document room to hunt up an old case in

relation to refunding of money to Madison County, Kentucky—taxes collected.

Newspaper men again after adjournment; then finally to the Arlington.

Signed thirty-seven letters.

Read over proceedings in several important matters pending, before dinner; read *Star* and other newspapers.

Dinner with Mrs. Platt without serious interruption!!!

Senator Stewart about Indian matters.

Walter Eli Clark about Wickersham case.

Elliott about seals.

Had planned to take up my correspondence at 7:30; reached room about nine o'clock.

Went through about a week's accumulation of mail, dictated twenty-three letters, and straightened up several matters by 10:30, when I felt I could dismiss my clerk for the night.

A mere recital of the questions of legislation in which he interested himself makes a formidable array. He secured an amendment to the Military Academy Appropriation bill placing General Hawley on the retired list of the army. He offered amendments to the Heyburn Pure Food bill, the Naval Appropriation bill, and minor measures; he handled a bill amending the copyright law, he secured the enactment of a dozen pension bills, and reported several measures from committees to which he belonged; he delivered eulogies on Hanna, Hoar, and Ingalls, each in its way a high specimen of memorial eloquence. He spoke more than a hundred times, debating in greater or less detail nearly fifty measures, criticising and delaying many private bills and items in appropriation bills which but for his watchfulness would have slipped through. He worked for the ratification of the arbitration treaties and the treaty with San Domingo. He discussed at some

length extravagance in printing, the distribution of seeds, the pressing of claims for injury to employés in government shops. He opposed the Pure Food bill which the newspapers of the day were calling upon Congress to enact and in favor of which the Senate was flooded with petitions. He was not against all legislation, but he declared that he would not vote for a bill like the one under consideration:

I do not believe there are twenty Senators out of the whole number of Senators here who believe that this is such a bill as ought to be passed, and for one I am not going to pass a bill in a hurry because there is some clamor somewhere that the subject must be attended to. The old adage about marrying in haste and repenting at leisure might well be applied to legislation—legislate in haste and repent at leisure. . . . I do not think the committee ought to bring any such bill here. I think it is contrary to the spirit of our laws, to the spirit of justice, to the spirit of fair play, to prosecute and convict any man for violating police regulations, and bills of this sort, when he is entirely innocent of any intent to violate them.

It seemed to him that the evil could be remedied in another way:

Suppose a bill were framed which defined what should be adulterated and misbranded articles. Then suppose the bill required that every manufacturer who put his goods into interstate commerce, or any other person who put goods into interstate commerce—that is, shipped them from one State to another,—should place upon the goods a guarantee that they were not adulterated and not misbranded within the definitions of the act. I do not see why the whole subject would not be reached in that simple way. Then the person guilty of selling misbranded or adulterated articles is easily found, easily prosecuted, and

all the people who might be entirely innocent, who had no desire to violate the law,would have no trouble about it whatever.

The wonder is that he should have borne up under the strain so long as he did, but he carried his work right through to the fourth of March, with the "crushing, grinding avalanche of legislation" incident to the closing weeks of a Congress, and witnessed the ceremonies inducting President Roosevelt into office.[1]

[1] An interesting light has been thrown on the Senator's last days in Washington by the talented newspaper correspondent, James B. Morrow. Shortly after Mr. Platt's death he wrote in the *Cleveland Leader:*

"I suppose I was the last newspaper man who went to see him in Washington. He was ill and showed it. During the impeachment trial of Judge Swayne he had acted as President of the court and had overtaxed his strength. He was seventy-eight years old and had suffered during the winter from two attacks of grippe. The Senate was in special session, being carried along after Mr. Roosevelt's inauguration for the purpose of confirming appointments and in an attempt to ratify the treaty with San Domingo. Platt wanted to get away; he longed for his home in Connecticut; he was weary of Washington and the work of Congress.

"I found him just after an executive session of the Senate in the committee room. He was walking the floor with nervous energy, still tall and erect in his body, still handsome in feature and countenance, and still graceful and steady in his physical movements. Another effort had been made to come to a vote on the treaty, but it had failed. The morning had been spent in useless talk, and opposition to the treaty was not alone garrulous, but was becoming decidedly partisan and obstinate. Standing in the centre of the room was a man who had called to ask Platt to write an article for a magazine on a subject of some importance.

" 'I have n't time,' Platt said in no gracious mood or tone. 'I have n't had any leisure for thirty years. I made a speech on the subject you want me to write about. Go look it up and see what I said. I don't know how it is with you,' he said to the man, 'but when I get through with a subject I pour it all out of my mind. If I ever take it up again, I have to go over the ground just as I

Some of his Connecticut friends who came to the inauguration remonstrated with him for overtaxing his slender physical resources during the trial, and he admitted that perhaps he ought to have remained in

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did before. I am asked every week to give my opinion to newspapers and magazines and to write them out. I can't do it.'

"The man was sympathetic and good-tempered, and Platt began to excuse his irritation by telling of his bodily and mental weariness.

" 'You have come at a bad time,' he exclaimed. 'I have been working for sixteen to eighteen hours a day for three months and am down at the heel. The public, I suppose, thinks we have an easy and agreeable time, but we are worked to death.' And he looked at me, as I thought, to confirm his statement.

" 'That is the view out-of-doors,' I replied. 'The world believes the Senate to be an altogether delightful and restful place.' This observation of mine did the magazine man no good. Platt stopped walking and looked at me in considerable disgust. I fancy there was some pity, too, in his mind, for such stupid ignorance of an incontrovertible fact. William Brimage Bate, Senator from Tennessee, was at that moment dead and in his coffin. He had gone to Roosevelt's inauguration, had sat down out-doors, had been stricken by pneumonia, and had 'gone to sleep' as St. Paul describes it, at the rare age of seventy-eight. Bate was in Platt's mind and so he said:

" 'The work of the Senate killed Hanna, and Bate, whose funeral we are to have this afternoon. It is only by God's blessing that it has n't killed me.'

"To re-establish myself I added: 'Senator Spooner complained to me this morning that he was worn out.'

" 'He is; I know he is,' Platt replied.

"The magazine man in the meantime had backed away toward the door, but he had not wholly given up his pursuit. 'After the special session of the Senate is over,' he ventured to say, 'I 'll come to see you again.'

" 'You will not find me,' Platt answered. 'I shall get out of this place on the first train.' Then as he recollected the uncertainty of his going and the contumacy of the Democrats, he added in some gentleness: 'However, if they keep on talking about the treaty, I fear we shall be kept here all summer.' The man waited in silence at the door, and as Platt thereafter utterly ignored his presence and turned to talk with me, he softly went out, thinking no doubt that the Senator from Connecticut was a peevish and

his room, but he said earnestly: "It was just as necessary that I should attend that impeachment court each day as that a man should be on hand when he is going to be hanged."

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much over-estimated old man. But he had simply appeared 'at a bad time.' Any one who loves to live in the woods, to search the fields for flowers, and to stand in the water and whip a brook for trout, contains the very elements of joy and sunshine. But with Platt these were not on the surface. Friendship dug for them and found them. Strangers never had that chance, but if they happened around at the right time they were fairly treated and sent away without offence."

CHAPTER XLVI

THE END

A President's Letter—Funeral of General Hawley—Address at Hartford—Death and Burial.

AFTER the fourth of March, the Senate remained in uneventful session for a fortnight, according to the usual practice with a new administration, the only business transacted being the confirmation of nominations and the consideration of the San Domingo treaty. The days were sultry and unseasonable, sapping the vitality of an old man still suffering from an exhausting winter's work. Mr. Platt's friends at home had known of his illness and were devising schemes for restoring him to health. One of them, about to cross the ocean, invited him and Mrs. Platt to go along. But the Senator would not hear to it:

I can not go to Europe with you. I wish I could. You will say I need it and must have the rest, but there are things that I must do, so that I can not be gone for six weeks or thereabouts from the twentieth of April.

And to Dr. Ford he wrote:

We will get away from here before long, but that will not stop my work, though I shall come home just as soon as I can. I can not break up my Adirondacks trip for anything, and I can not do the other things that I must do, and go to Europe and the Adirondacks too. Besides, it would be

no sort of rest for me I want a rocking-chair and a wood fire and quiet for a few days.

In recognition of his completion of twenty-six years of service in the Senate, Charles Henry Butler, Reporter of the Supreme Court, a long-time friend, had arranged to give him a dinner on Saturday, March 18th, the day on which the special session of the Senate came to an end. Invitations had been sent to the most notable men in Washington, the President, the Vice-President, the Chief Justice, the Secretary of State, his closest associates in the Senate. On the eve of the dinner, word came that General Hawley, who had been dying slowly for months, was about to pass into the hereafter. He was no longer a member of the Senate, his term of service having just come to an end, but he had been a colleague and close friend for a quarter of a century and at Mr. Platt's request the invitations were recalled. The sequel was as marked a tribute as the dinner would have been. Letters of hearty eulogy were received from many of the intended guests, among them this from President Roosevelt:

White House, March 18, 1905.

My dear Mr. Butler:

May I, through you, extend my heartiest greetings to the guest of the evening, Senator O. H. Platt. It is difficult to say what I really think of Senator Platt without seeming to use extravagant expression. I do not know a man in public life who is more loved and honored, or who has done more substantial and disinterested service to the country. It makes one feel really proud as an American, to have such a man occupying such a place in the councils of the nation. As for me personally, I have now been associated with him intimately during four sessions of Congress, and I can not overstate my obligations to him, not only for

what he has done by speech and vote, but because it gives me heart and strength to see and consult with so fearless, high-minded, practicable, and far-sighted a public servant.

Wishing you a most pleasant evening, believe me

Sincerely yours,

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

Mr. Platt was keenly affected and sent to Mr. Butler a note in which he said:

MY DEAR MR. BUTLER:

There are several things I want to say, and yet do not know how to say them. Your desire to give me a dinner on the occasion of my having served twenty-six years in the Senate, touched me more closely than I can tell you, and again, the kind and flattering words of the gentlemen whom you invited to meet me, either in acceptance, or equally in their expressions of regret, touched me even more deeply. Above all, the written words of the President, which I cannot but believe were sincere, made me feel that what I have tried to do through these many eventful years is appreciated beyond what I could have any reason to expect. I can never forget them. I wish you would let me have a copy of the President's letter. As the world counts gain, I have not much to leave those who come after me, but as I count fortune, I could leave no greater inheritance than that estimate of the most distinguished man in this country, or the world. I can not understand it all, but I am sure I appreciate it. It was a great disappointment to me, as I know it must have been to you, that under the circumstances I felt it best that the dinner should be called off, but I assure you that I shall always remember the friendship which prompted you to propose it, and the affectionate regard which all who were invited to participate in it seem to cherish for me.

Most sincerely yours,

O. H. PLATT.

General Hawley died on the day set for the dinner. The burial was at Hartford, with the ceremonies befitting a distinguished public service, and Senator Platt went north on the funeral train. It was a raw and blustering day in Hartford. He became chilled as he waited a long time with bared head on the platform of the railway station.

The General Assembly gathered in joint convention for memorial services, and he spoke a eulogy by which all who heard him were deeply moved. His towering form seemed shaken with grief as he uttered the simple sentences which came from his heart, concluding with words which had the fervor of a prayer:

> So we will not think of him as dead, but living, and we will think of him as we will think of friends whom we sometimes go down to see as they sail away in ships for foreign lands, never expecting to see them with our eyes again, but knowing that they are still in other fields exerting the activities of life. We will say farewell to-day as we commit him to the earth; no no, not farewell, but that better word "Good-by"—God be with you, Good-by. We will whisper that word "Good-by," for the heart feels most when the lips move not, and the eye speaks the gentle "Good-by."

From Hartford he returned to Washington to see the President again and attend to departmental business, and after two or three irksome days he went home to Kirby Corner, where he arrived on Tuesday afternoon. For a time he loafed about the house, dictating a few letters, reading, smoking, waiting for a revival of energy to take him out on the trail down to the brook which runs through the little valley below. On Friday, the last day of March, he had arranged to have

IN THE VILLAGE CEMETERY

his first outing, but instead there came a chill and then a fever. Dr. Ford was summoned and found him suffering from bronchitis with indications of pneumonia. He was seriously ill, but there was nothing alarming in the symptoms until the following Thursday when the evidences of pneumonia became pronounced. News of his illness had gone out, and messages of sympathy and encouragement came pouring in. Then for a few days there were signs of improvement, and for a time it looked as though he might throw off the disease, but the poison was in his blood. On Thursday, April 20th, there came a final relapse. He remarked quite casually to Dr. Ford: "You know what this means, Doctor, and so do I." It was the only allusion he had made to the seriousness of his condition. He lingered one more day. Then, his wife watching by his side, he fell asleep. At seven minutes before nine o'clock on April 21st, his soul passed behind the veil that hides the eternal mysteries. It was Good-Friday, the day on which he always liked to be among his old friends at home.

The announcement that the end had come fell upon the people of Connecticut with a heavy blow, and grief sat on men's faces as they talked among themselves. The air was filled with eulogy. Tributes sped home from all over the United States. It was known that a strong man had fallen.

The Governor of the State proposed a state funeral. Mrs. Platt declined the offer. She wanted the burial to be simple, and so it was. It was set for the morning of Tuesday, April 25th. The day was one of the fairest of the year, and the Litchfield hills were sprinkled with the budding beauty of the spring. A plain oak coffin rested in the living room at Kirby Corner until the time

approached for carrying it to the Meeting House on the Green. After a custom of the village, it was placed on a rude wagon covered with laurel and drawn by two gray horses bred on the farm where Orville Platt had grown to manhood. The horses were led by two neighbors, while the bearers, old village companions, walked on either side. Thus his ashes were borne to the church near which had gathered over two thousand people from the country round about. The church within had been fittingly dressed with flowers and the American flag.

There was no eulogy. The Episcopal service was read; a choir of villagers led in the singing of *America*, and as the body was carried down the aisle they sang, as a recessional, *Jerusalem the Golden*. Following the wagon and its sacred burden, the people, with uncovered heads fell into a procession which moved slowly from the Meeting House to the burying-ground on the hillside only a few rods away.

First came the family and servants, among them the Senator's faithful colored messenger James Hurley. Then came the Vice-President of the United States, the Governor and State officers, ten United States Senators: Bulkeley of Connecticut, Pettus of Alabama, Daniel of Virginia, Proctor of Vermont, Kean of New Jersey, Dick of Ohio, Carter of Montana, Gallinger of New Hampshire, Beveridge of Indiana, and Crane of Massachusetts; the Connecticut delegation in Congress and other members of the House of Representatives, Committees of the General Assembly, many men of note from Connecticut and other States, and a great throng of citizens, over one hundred men and women from Meriden alone among the number. The body was lowered into the grave overlooking a valley bathed in

sunshine, with wooded hills beyond. The people joined in singing "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," thus with full hearts giving thanks for the inspiration of a noble life.

A bronze tablet rests upon the grave with this inscription:

ORVILLE HITCHCOCK PLATT
OF CONNECTICUT

A SENATOR OF THE UNITED STATES
FOR 26 YEARS

HE SERVED GOD
HIS COUNTRY AND HUMANITY
WITHOUT FEAR
AND WITHOUT REPROACH

CHAPTER XLVII

AN OLD-FASHIONED SENATOR

The Lincoln of New England—Personal Traits—Mental Habit—Religious Tendencies—A Lover of Old Ways—Lofty Ideals.

CONNECTICUT people had a way of calling their senior Senator "The Abraham Lincoln of New England." A great many men have been likened to Lincoln at one time or another for all sorts of reasons, so that the comparison does not of necessity imply a striking compliment; yet in his case it had a fitness arising from something else than superficial physical resemblance or the possession of homely qualities of mind; for Platt had many of the finer traits which gave Lincoln his peculiar eminence, and knowing Platt one could not help the feeling that in Lincoln's circumstances he would have done about as Lincoln did. But with obvious points of similarity there were others in which the two were not at all alike, and it would not be right to carry the comparison too far.

Platt was as tall as Lincoln, towering nearly half a foot above most of his fellows. He carried himself with natural dignity in spite of his great height. Artists have said of Lincoln that he had "the awkwardness of nature which is akin to grace," and so had Platt. He might have seemed ungainly to a chance observer; yet he moved with the impressive ease that comes

from living out-of-doors, from tramping unploughed fields and rock-strewn hills, and marks the man of rural birth and habit from those who dwell in towns. He had a noble bearing born of a noble mind.

Those who remember Platt in boyhood agree that his face was strikingly handsome—almost Byronic in its beauty; and a daguerreotype which has come down to us bears out this flattering opinion. As he grew to manhood, the features developed lines of firmness which, to the stranger, often gave an impression of austerity though to those who knew him well his expression was not stern, but filled with amiability and good-will. It disclosed a simple strength of character, a harmony between mind and body, an unconsciousness of observation and indifference to outward things which were a truthful revelation of the man within, for no one ever went his way more straightly without caring how lookers-on might be impressed by what he did.

He had been a shy and bashful boy, oppressed with self-distrust. As he grew to be a man, his shyness fell away, though he never seemed fully conscious of his strength; yet to the end he was keenly sensitive, and, being so, showed delicate consideration for a like trait in others. Sometimes when vexed and troubled he seemed out of sorts to chance intruders, but he was always quick and generous with self-reproach. His transient mood would soon be followed by a note like this:

As soon as you were gone this morning I felt that I had not treated you very courteously or politely, but you caught me before breakfast and before my cigar, and I never half know what I am about then. Do not lay it up against me, will you?

These incidents were rare, for he was long-suffering

and kind, so much so that many who failed to understand his spirit of forbearance trespassed upon his patience with impunity.

His personal attachments were deep and tender. He was not demonstrative and rarely betrayed himself except at times in writing to a few for whom he cared. His native diffidence restrained him from speaking his inmost feelings, so that some regarded him as cold and distant when he was really famishing for human sympathy; but there was a gentle insistence in his manner more eloquent than words, when in the company of those he liked. To a few—only a few—he opened up his heart. "I get tired and lonely because I can not see you, and feel as though I had n't any friends," he writes to one of these, and "Now write me, for I can't endure the idea that I am forgotten." In eulogy of Charles A. Russell, to whom he was closely attached he said: "Parting with my colleague, my comrade, and my dear friend, I repeat the words of David when he mourned for Jonathan: 'Very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of woman.'"

He was subject at times to fits of depression when he felt like renouncing his dignities and going back to the artless existence of his early years. These spells came on him often during the last days of an exhausting session, when he was longing for the solitude of the Adirondacks or the restfulness of Judea. "I am like Elijah under the juniper tree," he wrote at the conclusion of his work on the Dingley tariff in the summer of 1897. And another time he writes with a whimsical touch: "The grasshopper that is continually hopping towards me looks as big as a coach team, and I know will be a burden when he gets to me."

ORVILLE·HITCHCOCK·PLATT
A SENATOR OF THE UNITED STATES.
WISE, PATIENT, KINDLY, AND OF
NOBLE PRESENCE, BOLD FOR THE
RIGHT, CHAMPION OF THE WEAK,
FAITHFUL AND STEADFAST HE SERVED
UNSELFISHLY HIS COUNTRY AND MANKIND.

But these were only fleeting phases. His habit was to look on life with cheerful courage and serene philosophy.

"More and more I see that contentment is great gain," he writes to an old schoolmate; and again: "Success and happiness are relative terms, and day by day I admire more and more the comprehensive line of an old poet of the sixteenth century—'My mind to me a kingdom is.'"

Of his political aspirations he said:

> I have no ambition. If the people of Connecticut want to send some one to the Senate in my place I shall not whimper or even care. I only want to go on while I have strength, doing what there is for me to do as well as I can, and whether it is here or elsewhere—in the Senate or in some quiet cabin by the way—makes no difference. I have no high notions about myself, ask for nothing, want nothing, am content. I think I have that much philosophy.

He was unaffectedly religious, though from his early experience among the excommunicated Abolitionists of Judea it was not to be expected that he would be straitly bound by dogmas. He wrote of his old teacher, Mr. Gunn, that "he loved God, loved man, loved truth; and he served God, served man, served truth"; and he might as well have written it of himself. He was reverent in all things. He believed in prayer and never fell asleep without one on his lips. He shrank from ceremony and was not a stickler for doctrines. Though a member of the Congregational Church in Meriden, a Bible-class teacher, and a deacon, he was not tied down to any religious denomination. During his later years he usually attended the Episcopal Church, both in Washington and Judea. He liked

the simplicity and directness of the service, which harmonized with his religious mood. He was versed in hymnology and knew many hymns by heart. His favorite was "Jesus, the very thought of Thee." That, he used to say, was the real Crusader's hymn. The Collect of which he was most fond was that for the ninth Sunday after Trinity:

> Grant to us, Lord, we beseech Thee, the Spirit to think and do always such things as are right; that we, who cannot do any thing that is good without Thee, may by Thee be enabled to live according to Thy will; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

But, after all, his most congenial place of worship was out-of-doors. His absorbing passion was the woods. Once there he melted into the environment as though he had never dreamed of any other life. He was continually crying, "My natural home is in the woods," and "I long more and more for the hermit life of the Adirondacks."

To one who understands him he writes:

> I am at home with the woods and waters and mountains, and it seems as though I could be happy there where I could let mind as well as body go to sleep.

And to another:

> When we go to the Adirondacks we go back absolutely to a state of nature, leaving all care and even knowledge behind. We eat and sleep, row and roam, and that is all. The mind rests with the body.

He liked old-fashioned things; read old books; studied old customs, especially those relating to the early days of New England and Connecticut. He

found relaxation in writing about incidents of early Connecticut history. He prepared papers on "The Extinction of the Meeting House," "The British Invasion of New Haven in 1779," the "Encounter between Roger Griswold and Matthew Lyon in 1798," and the quaint custom of Negro elections and the inauguration of Negro governors which prevailed in Connecticut in the early days of the last century. All this involved a lot of correspondence and hunting through the records, but he liked it, and his papers now have an historical value of their own. He was familiar with American and English history, knew by heart the story of the Revolution and the proceedings of the Continental Congress and the Constitutional Convention; was fond of mousing among curious old books, well known in their time but little considered nowadays, the names of the authors of which do not appear in any current lists. He was fond of archæology. He read everything he could lay hands on relating to ancient civilizations, and his one extravagance was the buying of rare books dealing with the customs of antiquity. "If I had leisure and means," he once said, "I should have been thoroughly taken up with archæological investigations." One thing that helped to reconcile him to the drudgery of his work on the Indian Committee was that it brought him close to the customs and practices of the aboriginal inhabitants of America, and he welcomed the opportunity to pursue inquiries along those lines. He was pleased when, after the death of Senator Morrill in 1899, he was made a Regent of the Smithsonian Institution, and he was deeply interested in the Institution as long as he lived. Its officers were among his most valued friends, and one of his last acts was to

help secure a $4,000,000 appropriation for the National Museum in 1904, which will be a lasting monument to him.

He had no knack for saving money and was generally indifferent to the things that money could buy. He accepted his financial sacrifice as one of the compensations of his political career, though as time wore on he could not help regretting that he had not laid by enough to insure a comfortable old age, and indulging occasionally in a half-humorous protest against the privations incident to life in Washington without sufficient means. He would have been contented with the most modest income, so long as it was sufficient to keep him from anxiety about the future. "I am very much inclined to think," he wrote quizzically in 1897, just after his fourth election to the Senate, "that if I had an annuity of $2000 I would let somebody else come to the Senate while I went fishing."

He had a dry Yankee humor which helped to save him from great errors and served him in his gentle mastery of men, so that he seldom erred in judging character or in weighing political conditions. He had many pat illustrations, though he rarely told a story; but he could enjoy another's story or a humorous situation as keenly as any man.

His sense of fitness saved him from frequent "interviews." He did not believe in announcing his position publicly on a question until the time came for him to speak in the Senate or to vote. He had known cases where Senators had found themselves embarrassed by declaring themselves on questions which they had not thoroughly studied, and he did not intend, if he could help it, to be caught that way; yet while avoiding publicity he would often help out one who was seeking

light by elucidating the points in question with a comprehensiveness and clarity which few men in the Senate could approach.

He had a high conception of the duty of a Senator. His great respect for the office kept him from interfering in the local politics of Connecticut. "It has always seemed to me," he said, "that I must do one of two things—try to be a boss in my State and control everything, or let it alone and try to be a Senator in Washington"; and so he was a Senator at Washington with all the name implies. Sometimes it hit him hard to be loyal to his idea. Early in the Roosevelt administration his own son became an applicant for appointment to the Federal Bench. There were other candidates and the politicians of the State were at odds among themselves. It was a trying time for the Senator. A word from him would settle the contest. He had not known his son would be a candidate until the fight was on, yet his affection tugged at him to help the younger Platt in an ambition which had been cherished for years. He was sick with worry and took to his bed, but he let his distress eat out his heart and would not lift a finger to influence the result. The President of his own accord decided to make the appointment, and when he announced it he added: "Senator Platt's conduct in this affair is the most unselfish exhibition of conscientious determination to make no selfish use of public power that I have ever seen." When James Platt called at the White House to thank the President, he was greeted with the hearty exclamation: "Your father is the whitest man I know!"

Throughout his life he fashioned his conduct after the manner of one who believed profoundly in the

never ending influence of every spoken word and unspoken thought. That was a sentiment to which he often gave expression as when, in the course of his tribute to Senator Hoar, he said:

> I am one of those who believe that no thought conceived by the brain, no word spoken by the lips, no act performed by the will, has ever been lost or ceases to exert its influence upon mankind. No thought, word, or act, of the highest, the lowest, the richest, the poorest, the best, or the worst of men and women who have lived on earth since the days when mankind became socially organized has ever been wholly effaced. The world is to-day what these thoughts, words, and deeds of all who have gone before us have made it.

He had an analytical mind. Things did not come to him by intuition. He had to think out a proposition slowly and laboriously, but when he had once got to the root of it he was conversant with every argument and had examined it from every point of view. There was no limit to his courage in sustaining a position which he had reached by plodding processes of thought, yet he had little pride of opinion and saw no shame in accepting the conclusions of others when once convinced that they were right, or in acknowledging his error if convinced that he was wrong. His mind was always open to new light. He never strove for popular applause nor cared for it save as it carried the presumption of work well done. He was not indifferent to praise or blame, yet he never sought one or feared the other. He was strongly moral, pure in thought as well as in deed. He was far-sighted, shrewd, and wise; of sound judgment, broadly human; trustful of his friends; guileless in a way, yet unbeguilable. In spite

of his gentleness and generosity of mind, he was stern and unyielding in advancing what he knew to be right, and he would flame with anger against what he felt to be wrong. No one was ever rash enough to approach him with a questionable proposition, and no one ever hesitated to solicit his adherence to a righteous cause. In twenty-five years of service in the Senate, he had gained a position of unquestioned authority, growing out of confidence which had never been betrayed.

There were others with more striking qualities of mind, more captivating personality, or greater faculty for organized control, but in the composite traits that go to make the ideal Senator no other was quite his equal. His word went a little farther than any other, his example was followed more frequently with implicit faith. His motive was never questioned, and his judgment was always held in unqualified respect.

In the minds of those who followed legislation closely for the quarter of a century during which he served, he was the most useful member of the body to which he belonged,—a Senator of the United States for Connecticut, without fear and without reproach.

CHAPTER XLVIII

WORDS FITLY SPOKEN

Tributes by his Associates in Public Life—Eulogies in the Senate—Senator Lodge's Estimate of his Character.

WHEN the last call comes to a man who has held a place in the general eye, it is customary for those who have been associated with him, or whose recognized position is supposed to give their judgment weight, to set down their estimates of his service. This is a formality due partly to convention and partly to the exigencies of public prints, so that from the nature of the case, with little regard to personal relations, the words thus spoken are uniformly commendatory.

A like rule holds, though in less degree, with editorial comment at the moment, before the time arrives for recording the impersonal verdict of history.

Of such perfunctory eulogy the death of Senator Platt evoked the usual amount, which those who knew him best could neither take exception to nor greatly prize; but in the multitude of tribute there was some which, as expressing the discriminating judgment of those who had an opportunity for intimate acquaintance with his career, may properly be given permanence in a sketch which aims to portray the salient features of his character and life. The messages of sympathy which winged their way to Kirby Corner

abounded in expressions of love and unaffected grief, as well as of respect.

"He was one of the strongest, gentlest, noblest, and most lovable men I ever knew," wrote William E. Chandler, who sat at the adjoining desk in the Senate for several years.[1]

Nelson W. Aldrich, who served with Mr. Platt on the Finance Committee for a decade, declared: "I am conscious of the loss of a dear friend, who was all in all the best man I ever knew"; and this sentiment he reiterated later in the Senate.

[1] Mr. Chandler writes:

"Mr. Platt was a man of very tender feelings of friendship toward his intimates, and I had the good fortune to be warmly loved by him.

"I was with him alone for a season at Long Lake in the Adirondacks, and our intercourse there strengthened our mutual affections.

"He was very lonely after his first wife's death, I think even more so because she had been so long an invalid.

"After Senator Morrill's death I moved my seat to the right of Mr. Platt, on the front row, and we continued together until I left the Senate.

"He was constantly making affectionate remarks. One day he seemed too quiet and a little disconsolate, and I began talking cheeringly to him. Shortly he said: 'I need more affection. Do you love me?' My reply was, 'Of course I love you.' But he continued: 'Do you *really* love me? Are you *sure* you love me?' My response was warm enough to satisfy one, and he laid his hand on mine with a gentle pressure that deeply affected us both. This incident is slight and it is impossible to reproduce, in words alone, the strong desire he showed for my affection and his satisfaction with what I could truthfully and sincerely assure him.

"I have had several experiences—doubtless more than my share—of reciprocal affection with men in public life, all disregarding sections and politics and heeding not mutual mistakes and faults, and I place my relations with Mr. Platt very near to the head of the list.

"It is a great satisfaction to me to know that his last years were brightened and his affections given full scope and reciprocated through ideal domestic relations."

William B. Allison, a fellow Senator for twenty-six years, wrote: "I know of no one who will be as much mourned for by his associates, not only for his most considerate and kindly qualities, but for his great usefulness to his country. He was in the Senate like the mainspring of a watch."

Shelby M. Cullom described him as the best "all around" member of the Senate. "Senator Platt," he wrote, "was capable in more ways to do what the exigencies of the day from time to time put upon him than any other man in the Senate. . . . His judgment was a little more exactly right than any other Senator's."

Others who had been associated with him in Washington bore testimony:

William H. Taft: The country which he loved so well has lost from a place of great power and usefulness a protector and defender of its best interests whom it could ill afford to lose. He stood four-square to all the winds that blew.

John C. Spooner: Those of us who knew the Senator, the trend of the times, the power for good of his learning, experience, watchfulness, and conscience, and the great part he played in council and in action, realize more keenly than can the country at large the country's loss. But in the last years, with all his modesty, the country had grown to know and trust him as a great statesman, and the knowledge of this, testified in so many ways, must have been an unspeakable comfort to him.

Elihu Root: He will always live in my memory as one of the purest and best public servants whom I have ever known.

Edward Everett Hale: He could not know how

profound was the regard and respect in which I held him. I had not the honor of even an acquaintance with him until I became Chaplain of the Senate. But then his welcome and kindness to me were constant. His seat was close to the steps by which I came down from the desk, every day, and I was perhaps apt to catch his eye and kind salute more often than that of any Senator. More than once he asked me to take his seat when I was on the floor. . . . I was almost always present at the sessions of the impeachment. I like to recall now the dignity with which he clothed that whole proceeding, in his position of president. I am sure that the serious, most impressive character which he gave to all that was done will remain as a lesson to all of us.

Charles W. Fairbanks: He was level-headed and courageous. He was a laborious and intelligent student, yielding his judgment only to the best reason. He helped fashion some of the most important laws enacted by Congress during the last quarter of a century. I know of no one who was a safer guide than he in public affairs. There was no one who more than he thoroughly consecrated himself to the discharge of his public duties. He was able and as modest as able.

Leslie M. Shaw: A good man and a great statesman, without dissimulation and with no thought of guile. I have not known a greater statesman than Orville H. Platt.

Simeon E. Baldwin: Senator Platt took his election to the Senate not as a reward to be enjoyed, but as an opportunity to be made the most of. In committee work and out of committee he was a faithful worker. He entered on old age without claiming its privileges and without feeling its weaknesses. I am inclined

to think that his influence was greater, his position higher, after he had passed the age of seventy than it had ever been. . . . Such a life makes one feel how superior is the individual to his circumstances. Narrow means, a scanty education, hard toil on a rock farm—these were the beginnings from which Senator Platt advanced to a great station, to fill it well. . . . We who live most of us in a university town, most of us the sons of the university, are sometimes in danger of over-estimating what a university can give. It can not give talent nor supply its place. The native God-given faculty in every man who makes his mark has been his best inheritance. It is of an elevated kind, it can attract education to itself, like a magnet, whatever be the course of life he may pursue. It was so that Senator Platt became his own teacher, and from his youth up his horizon was always extending. Such men may well do their best work last.

In the eulogies spoken in the Senate and in the House a year after his death, there was a note of sincerity and deep feeling which made the occasion memorable among ceremonies of the kind. His former associates dwelt not only upon the ability of Mr. Platt as a legislator, but also upon his personal qualities, his unselfishness, his faculty of co-operation, his capacity for friendship.

In the House on April 14, 1906, the speakers were Sperry, Hill, Henry, Higgins and Lilley of Connecticut, Sherman and Payne of New York, Grosvenor of Ohio, and Clark of Missouri.

In the Senate on April 21st the speakers were Bulkeley and Brandegee of Connecticut, Allison of Iowa, Morgan of Alabama, Teller of Colorado, Aldrich of Rhode

Island, Lodge of Massachusetts, Daniel of Virginia, Perkins of California, Nelson of Minnesota, Beveridge of Indiana, and Kean of New Jersey.

Thus, men representing every shade of political opinion and all sections of the country bore tribute.

The address of Senator Lodge was so discriminating and disclosed so fine an appreciation of Mr. Platt's character that it is given here in its entirety, while significant passages have been selected from other eulogies.

Address of Mr. Lodge

Mr. President, among the remarkable men who framed the Constitution of the United States, two of the most conspicuous were Roger Sherman and Oliver Ellsworth, delegates from the State of Connecticut. To them, and particularly to the former, was due the great compromise which preserved the power of the States in the new system by securing to them equality of representation in the Senate, to which was due, more than to any other one condition, the success of the Philadelphia Convention and its complete, but narrow, escape from failure and defeat. The provision thus adopted in regard to the basis of representation in the Senate and the House was known as the "Connecticut Compromise," in honor of the men whose skill, foresight, and ability brought it into existence. Both Sherman and Ellsworth subsequently became Senators and helped to organize the new Government which the Constitution had called into being. To Ellsworth, who was afterwards Chief Justice and one of the commissioners who made the peace with France, we also owe the Judiciary act—a law which has so long withstood the test of time and of changing conditions that it seems to-day to possess almost the fixity and sanctity of the Constitution itself.

Neither Sherman nor Ellsworth was a brilliant orator like Patrick Henry, nor a great administrator and leader like

Hamilton, nor a consummate party chief and political manager like Jefferson. They were public men of large ability and strong character, pre-eminently constructive statesmen of the Hamiltonian school who left enduring monuments of their wisdom and foresight in the Constitution which they helped to frame, and in the laws which they placed upon the statute book.

Men, however, of such unusual character and strong mental qualities as Sherman and Ellsworth leave their mark not merely upon the legislation and the history of their time, but upon the minds of the communities in which they live, a very lasting memorial, for habits of mind, although as impalpable as air, are often more imperishable than stone or bronze.

> "Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
> Of princes shall outlive the powerful rhyme"—

said the greatest of all poets. The rhyme of the poet is but words, words are but the thoughts of men grown articulate, and yet he who shapes and influences the thoughts and imagination of men leaves in his due proportion a monument which will endure when iron has rusted and marble crumbled away.

The community which produced Sherman and Ellsworth was naturally extremely apt to receive the impress of their influence, and these two men stamped themselves deeply upon the modes of thought and upon the instinctive mental attitude toward great questions of the people of Connecticut who had given them to the nation and to the public service. Those who came after them insensibly followed the path their great predecessors had marked out, and although questions changed and new issues arose, the habit of mind and mode of thought remained unaltered. Nature, we are told, is careful of the type, no matter how indifferent she may be to the individual, and certain it is that in communities of strong character and salient qualities

of intellect habits of thought not only endure, but the type is reproduced. The type may not be continuous, but it is almost unfailingly recurrent.

It always seemed to me as I watched Senator Platt, listened to his speeches, and passed in my relations with him from acquaintance to friendship, that I recognized in him the qualities and the statesmanship of Roger Sherman and Oliver Ellsworth. When, a few years ago, I had occasion to make a study of Ellsworth's career, I felt sure that I understood him and realized what manner of man he was because I knew Senator Platt.

This type, which I had thus found in history and then met in daily life, is as fine as it is strong, and comes out as admirably in its modern exemplar as in those which illustrated the great period of Constitution making and of the upbuilding of the National Government. Senator Platt was conspicuously a man of reserved force and of calm reason. I have seen the calmness disappear in the presence of what he believed imported either evil to the republic or wrong to man, but I never saw the wisdom of his counsels, no matter how much he may have been moved, distorted or disturbed. Naturally a lover of all the traditions of ordered liberty and obedience to law in which he had been reared, and which were ingrained in his nature, he was as far removed as possible from the stagnation and reactionary tendencies which too often injure and discredit conservatism. Because he clung to that which was good was never a reason with him for resisting change. On the contrary, he sought and urged improvement always. The service he rendered in the case of the Copyright law was but one instance among many of his well-directed zeal in behalf of civilization and of an enlightened progress which should keep pace with the march of events. His mind was too constructive ever to be content with immobility or to accept the optimism satirized by Voltaire, that "whatever is, is right." He wished to make the world better and the lives of men happier, and he knew this could not be done

by doggedly and unreasoningly resisting all change and all advances merely because he revered the principles long ago established and had abiding faith in the foundations of free government laid deep and strong by the fathers of the Republic. In nearly all the important legislation which went to enactment during his long career of public service, those who will take the trouble to study the records will find the sure trace of his unobtrusive but strong and shaping hand. One great achievement of constructive statesmanship which is not only fixed among our laws, but which has become part of the constitution of another country, bears his honored name. Yet there are many more like unto it and scarcely less important in which he bore a leading part or which were due to him alone that have no name attached to them and the true authorship of which will only be revealed to the future student of history when he is delving for material among the dry dust of dead debates.

To be anonymous in his work was much more characteristic of Mr. Platt than to affix his signature where all men might read it. He seemed to me not only to care less for self-advertising, but to be more averse to it than almost any public man I ever knew. He longed for results, and was finely indifferent when it came to the partition of the credit for obtaining them. This is a phase of mind, a kind of personal pride and self-respect, not unworthy of consideration, for it is sufficiently rare in these days of ours, so flooded with news and so overwhelmed by easy printing. I do not think Mr. Platt ever reasoned the matter out and then rested, satisfied that lasting fame and a place in the history of the time had no relation whatever to the noisy notoriety of the passing hour, with its deafening clamors ever ringing in our ears. It was simply part of his own nature, because ostentation in all its forms was distasteful to him and because he shrank from exhibiting himself, his emotions, or his works as sedulously as some men strive to avoid anything which resembles retirement

or privacy. His industry was unflagging, and, again, in small things as in great, in defeating a doubtful claim as in building up a great law, he sought results and nothing else. If he could pass the measure he desired he was more than glad to dispense with making a speech. If he could defeat an obnoxious bill by an objection, or throw out a bad amendment on a point of order, he was quite content to avoid debate; but if debate was necessary, he was as formidable as a lucid, trained, legal mind, coupled with full information and a power of vigorous, clear statement, could make him. He was thorough in all he undertook—as effective in the endless complications of a great tariff as in guarding against the perils which beset our Indian legislation. Outside this chamber his services to the Indians, and to the good name and credit of the United States in its dealings with those difficult and helpless savages, performed during many years of unremitting toil as a member of the Committee on Indian Affairs, will never be rightly valued or understood. It was the kind of hard, self-sacrificing work for the sake of the right and to help others which must be in itself and in the doing thereof its own great and sufficient reward.

I have tried to indicate very imperfectly those qualities which seem to me especially to distinguish Senator Platt as a statesman, for a statesman of high rank he most certainly was. But I am well aware that I have dwelt almost exclusively upon his effectiveness, his indifference to self-advertisement, and his unremitting pursuit of results, and have passed by many of the qualities which went to make up the man and to account for his large success. His great ability, his power of work, his knowledge, his sense of justice, his fearlessness in the battle with wrong, his capacity for working with other men, were all conspicuous in Mr. Platt, and all necessary to the distinguished achievements of his life. He possessed also a very much rarer gift in his complete retention of that flexibility which is so apt to diminish as men advance

in life. The mind, like the muscles, tends to stiffen as we grow older, and only too frequently no effort is made to avoid the consequent rigidity. Both mind and muscle will go on performing most admirably the particular functions to which they have been accustomed, but they both alike recoil from a new idea or an unwonted exertion. From all this Mr. Platt was extraordinarily free. Neither his age nor his natural conservatism hindered the movements of his mind or made him shrink from a new idea or tremble and draw back from an unexpected situation. In the last ten years of his life he saw sudden and vast changes in the relations of the United States to the rest of the world and in our national responsibilities. He did not hide from them or shut his eyes and try to repel them. He met the new conditions not only with the flexibility, but with the keen interest of youth, while at the same time he brought to the solution of the new problems all the wisdom of a long experience. He did not turn away with dark forebodings from the startling changes which the rush of hurrying events swept suddenly upon us, but confronted them with a cheerful heart, a smile upon his lips, and a firm faith in the future of his people and of his country.

> "We knew him not? Ah, well we knew
> The manly soul, so brave, so true,
> The cheerful heart that conquered age,
> The child-like silver-bearded sage."

A very fine public career ended when Senator Platt died. In him we lost a statesman of a type which the country can ill spare, a thorough American type which we may well pray to have sustained and renewed among us. It is not a type which certain ephemeral defamers, just now very vocal, admire; but it is to statesmen of this precise kind and stature that we owe in largest measure the foundation and organization of our Government and the ordered liberty and individual freedom which have made the United States

what it is to-day. Senator Platt was a man who was at once an honor to the country which he served and guided and a vindication of our faith in a government of the people who chose him as representative of themselves.

I have spoken of Senator Platt only as a public man. But to us here his death is much more than a public loss. He was our friend. Those who come after us will know of his public services, of the work he did, of the large place he filled in the history of the time; but we also remember, and shall never forget, the honesty of heart and mind, the simplicity and purity of life, the humor, the love of books and sound learning, and, above all, the kindness which never failed and the loyalty which never faltered. Others may, with full faith in the destiny of the republic, we can confidently say, others will come to take up and carry on the public work to which his life was given, but the place which the tried and trusted friend has left empty in our affections can not again be filled.

Mr. Bulkeley

The dignity of his presence always gave an added interest to the gatherings of the people, the earnestness of his manner commanded the close attention of his hearers, and the moral lessons which he never failed to inculcate, and the influence of a godly Christian character, which he deemed so essential to the welfare of society and for which his own personal life was so conspicuous, furnished ample food for thought and reflection.

The people of Connecticut never failed in their confidence or loyalty to their Senator. His whole public life of untiring industry, sterling integrity, and devotion to duty realized their expectations when they selected him from their own ranks to represent them in the council chamber of the nation, and confirmed his own declaration at the outset of his Senatorial life: "I shall try to do right as I see the right."

Senator Platt rounded out his service in this body as Chairman of the Judiciary Committee of which he had previously been a member, and as your presiding officer on one of those rare occasions in the history of our country that this Senate has been called upon to exercise its constitutional judicial functions. His work of accomplishment ended with the Fifty-eighth Congress and the short executive session that followed. He closed his great career with an unsullied record and reputation, the peer of the honored Connecticut Senators, Ellsworth, Sherman, Johnson, Trumbull, Buckingham, and others who preceded him.

His last public act was to participate in the legislative memorial exercises at the State Capitol, in Hartford, in memory of his long-time friend and colleague; friends when "creeds could not bind the consciences of such men. They found a law higher than creeds; they inquired only their duty to God and man, and did their duty as they saw it."

His none too rugged frame had wearied in its work, the throbbing heart pulse was to him the prophetic warning of a near reunion and renewed activities in the life beyond, as he depicted in loving, tender words his graceful tribute to the life and character of Connecticut's idol soldier and statesman that had already entered into the new life; it was a "Good-by" and not a farewell.

The needed rest and recreation he sought in his home in his native town, "little Washington," as he would designate it, but the coveted rest never came until "he slept with the fathers."

He had honorably filled his own place both in private and public life, and left behind an imperishable name to illumine the annals of his State and nation. He had fought the good fight and kept the faith; with an unclouded mind, with a characteristic faith, and an undimmed eye he had seen in an awakening vision

"An angel, writing in a book of gold;
Exceeding peace had made him (Ben Adhem) bold,
And to the presence in his room he said:
'What writest thou?' The vision raised its head
And with a look made all of sweet accord
Answer'd: 'The names of those who love the Lord.'
'And is mine one?' said he (Adhem). 'Nay, not so,'
Replied the angel. He spoke more low,
But cheerily still, and said: 'I pray thee, then,
Write me as one who loves his fellow-men.'
The angel wrote and vanished. The next night
It came again, with a great wakening light,
And show'd the names whom love of God had bless'd,
And lo! his (Ben Adhem's) name led all the rest."

He fell asleep
April twenty-first, nineteen hundred and five,
Washington, Connecticut.

Mr. Brandegee

He was a leader. He did not lead because he tried to lead, but because the people followed him. He did not lead because he pretended to be the special friend of the people, as demagogues are wont to do, but because he laid his course by his own compass, and that compass always pointed to the true pole. . . . He was no theorist. He was not a doctrinaire. He had none of the traits of the visionary or the mystic. He dreamed no dreams and he pursued no chimeras. He insisted upon the facts. He was virile and powerful, mentally and physically. His appearance was most impressive. He was cast in the patriarchal mould. He towered to a height of six feet and four inches, and his frame and head were as massive and rugged as the granite ledges and crags of his native Litchfield County.

His features were large and somewhat furrowed, and to those who saw him for the first time his countenance was apt to convey a suggestion of austerity. But this effect

was relieved by the saving grace of a delicious sense of humor and an inimitable twinkle of the eye. His manner was deliberate, and he was well balanced and at all times perfectly self-controlled. He was patient, industrious, kindly, cautious, and sound. He was pre-eminently safe and sane. His judgment was excellent and his gift of common sense approached to genius. His temperament was judicial, and he clearly perceived and carefully weighed every phase of a question. With his clear vision he penetrated the heart of every problem and discriminated with unerring precision between the vital principles upon which a correct solution depended and the irrelevant and delusive matters which confuse other minds. He was possessed of an intuitive sense as to the wisest course to pursue, which was so accurate as to amount almost to prescience. He despised shams, hypocrisy, and pretence. He was straightforward, sincere, and reliable. He was a man of sterling integrity, and was as honest with himself as with his fellows. It was as impossible to deceive him as it was for him to attempt to deceive others. He was inspired with high ideals and was endowed with a deep religious nature. His logical mind moved with the mathematical accuracy of an adding machine, and the most complicated questions were reduced and clarified in the fervent crucible of his intellectual analysis. He was intensely human and was always glad to cloak the faults of others with the broad mantle of charity. He was passionately fond of nature. The sound of the brooks tumbling down their rocky beds, the rustle of the leaves in the woods, the songs of birds, the voices of the wild things, the variegated tints of the foliage, the odors of flower and fern and moist glade, the sunshine and shadow, the dying monarch of the forest and the springing bud, the sunset skies, the majesty of the snow-capped mountain, the abyss of the dark canyon, the rolling prairie, the river sweeping away into the distance, the vast and heaving ocean—all these spoke to him in a language of music and poetry to which every fibre

of his soul was attuned and to which it responded with joy and gratitude.

Among all the honors, the battles, and the triumphs of his life, continued far beyond the threescore years and ten allotted by the Psalmist, the home of his boyhood and the wild scenery and stalwart people of his native Litchfield County lay closest to his heart. In the free, open air of this beautiful section, as he whipped the brooks and hunted its game, he developed that magnificent character which never knew a stain and that splendid courage which never surrendered a principle. Here he imbibed that wholesome nature, that childlike faith, that moral standard and stamina, that indomitable will, that fine perception, that shrewd insight, that independence and love of personal liberty, which made him a tower of strength and a very present help in time of trouble.

Mr. President, in the death of Senator Platt Connecticut lost her ablest and most distinguished public servant, this body one of its wisest and most trusted counsellors, and the nation one of its soundest statesmen. He always dared to act as he believed. He never compromised with expediency. He was a great man—in stature, in brain, in character, in influence, in deeds, and in righteousness.

Mr. Beveridge

All who knew him intimately were agreed that the amazing youthfulness of his mind was by far his most notable mental characteristic. Old as he was, he attacked new problems with the eager strength of young manhood's mental vitality, solved them with young manhood's faith. He never doubted the wisdom, righteousness, and power of the American people. He believed devoutly, unquestioningly in their mission and destiny in the world. Who that heard will ever forget his instantaneous and unprepared reply to the venerable Senator from Massachusetts on our duty in the Philippines and our certain future in

the Orient and the world? How like a prophet of the olden time he seemed that evening, as with eyes glowing with religious fire and voice ringing trumpet-clear as the voice of youth, he delivered with passionate earnestness that inspired speech. . . . It was with this youthful vigor, vision, and undoubtingness that Senator Platt solved the Cuban question. There was no precedent. He made one. Ordinary intelligence can cite precedents and apply decided cases to like situations. It needs greatness to create by sheer thought solutions of unheard-of problems. And that is what Senator Platt did in the immortal Platt Amendment, which, written in our statutes and incorporated in the Cuban constitution, established over that island the indestructible suzerainty of the republic—all for the good and safety of the Cuban and the American people alike. . . . It was nothing to him that men should remember or observe what he said or did; it was everything to him that his word and deed accomplished something for his country. And so he was fearless and pure and wise and brave; his life without stain, his course without variableness or shadow of turning. It was this conception of duty, vitalizing and consecrating his great intellect, that made him the ideal statesman of the American people.

Mr. Aldrich

. . . He was simple and just by nature, able, intelligent, courageous, and wise with the wisdom that dominates and controls.

Although he was by nature intensely practical and shrank instinctively from anything like pretence and cant, yet in thought and action he always adopted the highest possible standards and invariably followed the highest ideals. I venture the assertion that no man ever held a membership in the Senate who had to a greater extent the confidence and esteem of his associates than the late Senator Platt.

I can not refrain from saying a few words with reference to our personal relations. The fact that we represented adjoining States, whose industries and material interests were practically identical, was not the cause, but rather an incident to our warm personal friendship. Throughout its existence there was, on my part, a constant growth of admiration and affection for the man. In every phase of my work here I found his counsel most helpful. In his death I am conscious of the loss of a dear friend, who was, all in all the best man I ever knew.

Mr. Morgan

His forceful, successful, and controlling leadership in the Senate, without any manifestation of ambitious impulses or purposes, signalizes Senator Orville H. Platt as being a model American Senator, whose example, now that he is gone, is worth nearly as much to the Senate and the country as his unfailing labors were worth while he lived. . . .

Senator Platt was, in outward seeming, to those who did not know the shrinking modesty of his nature, a man of marble, cold and polished in statuesque dignity, with little love for his kind. In fact, he was so tender a lover of all who were suffering affliction or were in danger of the visitations of wrong and injustice that his chief joy in life was in giving them comfort and strength and in lifting their hopes above despair.

Mr. Nelson

. . . He was trusted and relied upon in every great legislative emergency, for his wisdom and conservatism were so pronounced and so familiar to all. He was the fairest legislator I have ever met, modest and without any personal pride. It sometimes happened, though less often than with other men, that he, in the first instance, might misjudge or misapprehend the merits of a measure, but if he did, he was ever ready to be corrected, and when

convinced of his mistake he was not merely content to acknowledge the mistake, but he became zealous to make full amends, and this was a trait that endeared him to so many of his associates. . . .

The moral influence of Senator Platt was even greater than his intellectual force and power. He impressed every one who came in contact with him that he was actuated by the highest and noblest motives in all his efforts. No one ever questioned or doubted his honesty, his integrity, and the purity of his motives. There was a serene calmness, coupled with clearness and earnestness, in his deliberations and in his speeches. He was no legislative specialist with only a single hobby or a single line of work. He was equipped for and devoted to every great line of legislative work in a greater measure than most of his colleagues; and above all he gave his entire heart and energy to the work in hand. All that was his he gave to his country with a whole heart and without any reservation.

Mr. Perkins

We all know the singleness of purpose with which he grappled with all great questions. The patient study that he devoted to them was for the sole purpose of arriving at the truth, for, like the trained scientist, he knew that truth alone will make a stable foundation for legislation, and that without truth at the bottom all legislation is worse than the falsehood on which it is based. This was the cause of that laborious, patient, unceasing study of financial, social, and political problems which come before us for solution, and was the means of storing his mind with facts which served as signposts on the road to that goal which he always sought—the best interests of the people of the United States. It was this quality of thoroughness which made him a guide in whom all could place confidence and whom we could follow with the assurance that we could not go far astray. I think every Senator will say that

during his service here with Orville H. Platt he has observed no one of his colleagues who was so vigilant in watching the course of legislation, so sure to discover dangers, and so prompt to apply remedies.

Mr. Sperry

His modesty and his retiring disposition stood in his way. He cared nothing for the transient fame that most men strive for. He sought and obtained the high regard of his own colleagues, the best judges of his ability. So when the serious problems growing out of the Spanish War confronted us, especially with regard to the future of Cuba, it was no surprise to those who had watched Senator Platt for twenty years to find that upon him devolved the task of solving the complex question of our relations with the island of Cuba. . . . Throughout his busy life he continued the even tenor of his way, looking always straight ahead, never caring one iota for public praise or censure. He knew he always did his duty as he saw it, and he felt confident the people who showered political honors upon him would rightly estimate the spirit and value of his work. And they did.

Mr. Hill

When the Republic of Hawaii was organized, the first Minister to this country chanced to be a personal friend of mine. Soon after his arrival at Washington he asked me to procure an interview for him with the senior Senator from Connecticut. On Senator Platt's suggestion the interview was held in a closed carriage on that same evening, and, as the driver wandered aimlessly for nearly three hours about the streets of Washington, inside of that carriage questions were put and answers given, policies discussed and conclusions reached, which ultimately brought Hawaii under the sovereignty of the United States as an organized Territory.

Leaving the Minister at his home, I took the Senator to his hotel, and as he stepped from the carriage he said: "I guess the time has come when we must think about entering upon some form of a colonial system." From that day the one absorbing thought of his life was the relation which the United States, the dominant power of the Western Hemisphere, should hold to the weaker continental powers and the islands in the two oceans which wash our shores; and when a little later the war with Spain had thrown upon us the responsibility of Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Philippines, and statesmen doubted as to the right of a representative republic to hold control and sovereignty of unrepresented peoples, he demonstrated beyond cavil or dispute, in a speech of wonderful simplicity but marvellous strength, that the United States possessed inherently, as well as under its Constitution, all of the rights and powers pertaining to any absolutely independent sovereign nation. The Platt Amendment to the Cuban constitution was only a practical application of the principles enunciated in the earlier speech, and it is entirely safe to say, that as Abraham Lincoln demonstrated to the world the right of the republic to preserve its own life against attacks from within, so it is due to Orville H. Platt, as much as to any other one man, that the United States stands forth among the powers of the world to-day the equal of any in every right, in every privilege, in every degree and kind of sovereignty, and lacking in no respect in any prerogative enjoyed or claimed by any other. If he had done nothing else but this in his twenty-six years of service in the Senate, he would have left his imprint on the history of his time.

APPENDIX

I

MEMORIAL RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT THE JANUARY SESSION NINETEEN HUNDRED AND FIVE

Resolved, by this Assembly, That in the death of ORVILLE H. PLATT the people of this State experience a heartfelt grief, and are deeply sensible of the loss which they have thereby sustained.

In his removal from us, the State has been deprived of the services of a tried and faithful public servant, who has discharged with conspicuous ability the onerous duties that for more than a quarter of a century have rested upon him as a Senator in the Congress of the United States from this Commonwealth.

Throughout his long public service, both in the positions of honor and trust to which he was called by his constituents before being chosen by the people of Connecticut to represent them in the United States Senate, and during his continuous service in that body for twenty-six years last past, by virtue of five consecutive elections to the post of honor, he has ever been true to every trust reposed in him.

His attainment to the highest plane of true statesmanship, by unselfish and patriotic effort and unwavering fidelity to the public interest, earned universal recognition and praise from the country at large, and has reflected credit and honor upon this State.

Connecticut people, especially, have, with ever increasing appreciation, followed his course of steady and substantial

growth and development to the commanding position of influence which he exercised at the seat of government.

The feeling of our people towards Orville H. Platt, as in his advanced years he still bore the heat and burden of the day in the discharge of his responsible duties cannot be measured by that of mere appreciation and respect, but was and is more akin to love; and the memory of his simple and winning personality, and his earnest devotion to the interest of the State and of the country will long linger in the memory of a grateful people.

Resolved, That this resolution be engrossed, and that a copy thereof be sent to the family of the deceased Senator, and that this resolution be printed in the journals of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Attest:

ALFRED B. BALDWIN,
JOHN A. SPAFFORD,
Clerks.

II

MESSAGE OF GOVERNOR ROBERTS ANNOUNCING TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THE DEATH OF MR. PLATT

It is my sad duty to notify you of the death on Friday evening, April 21st, at Washington, Conn., of Senator Orville Hitchcock Platt, thereby causing a vacancy in the representation of the State of Connecticut in the United States Senate.

The death of Senator Platt is a loss to this State and to this nation. Connecticut mourns a representative in Congress whom she has honored and trusted, and our common country will miss a valued counsellor, an unselfish public servant, and a wise statesman.

Senator Platt was born in the town in which he died, July 19, 1827. Our common schools provided him a means

of education and an able lawyer of his own county prepared him for admission to the Bar of this State.

Immediately upon his entrance on the active duties of his profession he was called by his fellow townsmen in Meriden to serve them as Judge of its Probate Court.

In 1855 he was elected Clerk of the Connecticut Senate; in 1857, Secretary of the State; 1861–2, State Senator; in 1864 and in 1869, Representative in the Legislature, serving in the latter year as Speaker of the House, and in 1877 he was appointed State's Attorney for New Haven County.

In all these positions he displayed the qualities of leadership, high-minded purpose, and a personal character which won him the respect of all whom he served. He became recognized as a wise man to follow and a safe man to trust.

In the year 1879 he was elected to the office of representative of the State of Connecticut in the Senate of the United States. In 1885, 1891, 1897, and 1903 he was re-elected to this high office by the General Assembly of this State.

For these honors which this State took pleasure in giving him, he returned a service devoted to her highest interests and a cordial espousal of all her just issues.

His career in the United States Senate has been long. Each year he grew in effective service. The desire that his country should always pursue the course that seemed to his Christian conscience to be right, combined with his ability, industry, tact, and experience, gradually brought him to a high position in her councils and he became one of her statesmen, perhaps trusted and followed beyond the most of his associates.

His life has been pure and useful. He was courteous and helpful; simple in living, with a deep faith in the onmoving purpose of God, and a Christian gentleman whose memory and influence this State and nation will long cherish.

His funeral is to be held at Washington, Conn., this afternoon at one-thirty o'clock.

As a token of respect to his memory I recommend that

your honorable body adjourn for the day and take any other action that may seem to you fitting and proper.

III

MEMORIALS IN BRONZE

The State of Connecticut by acts of 1905 and 1907 appropriated $25,000 to erect in the Capitol grounds at Hartford a memorial to Senator Platt, provision being made at the same time for a memorial to General Hawley. For the Platt memorial a commission was created consisting of H. Wales Lines of Meriden, President, Albiram Chamberlain of Meriden, John H. Whittemore of Naugatuck, Lewis Sperry of South Windsor, Charles L. Hubbard of Norwich, and William J. Ford of Washington, together with the Commission of Sculpture, which at that time consisted of Kirk H. Leavens of Norwich, Charles Noll Flagg and Arthur L. Shipman of Hartford, Henry W. Farnam and Bernadotte Perine of New Haven, and Robert Scoville of Salisbury. On the death of Dr. Ford, E. K. Rossiter of Washington was appointed to the vacancy. Burton Mansfield of New Haven was appointed to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Mr. Scoville and H. Siddons Mowbray of Washington to fill that caused by the death of Mr. Leavens. The commission have accepted the design of H. A. MacNeil. the American sculptor,—a medallion in bronze with marble border, about eight feet in diameter, representing the Senator in high relief seated at his desk. The medallion will be placed on the wall at the right of the principal entrance to the State Capitol.

A beautiful and appropriate bronze tablet, the work of A. Bertram Pegram, an English sculptor, has been placed in the library building on Washington Green, the gift of Mr. E. H. Van Ingen of New York, a friend and summer neighbor of Senator Platt.

IV

THE PLATT NATIONAL PARK

The Platt National Park is in the southwest corner of the "Chickasaw Nation," Indian Territory—now merged in the new State of Oklahoma. It comprises 848 acres of land, and abounds in trees of nearly every description, hills, dales, ravines, cliffs, and boulders of a pre-historic age. The reservation was set aside by treaty with the Choctaw and Chickasaw tribes of Indians, through the efforts of Senator Platt, so that the springs and creeks might be preserved forever for the benefit of the whites and Indians.

In 1906, Congress by special act bestowed upon this reservation the name of Platt National Park as a memorial to the Connecticut Senator.

V

THE JUDGMENT OF THE PRESS

Hartford Courant

Mr. Platt's career in the Senate has been one of steady growth in influence and usefulness. It will probably not do to describe him as a brilliant man, although now and then a most delightful humor and a quick Yankee wit showed themselves in his utterances. But he was always safe and wise, and his associates came to trust him more and more. They were sure of his motives and never had to look for the selfish or ulterior purpose. His clients were the State of Connecticut and the United States of America. His judgments vindicated themselves so often that their soundness ceased to be questioned, and he stepped into his position of leadership, not through pushing ambition, but simply by the right of recognition. He led, because others wanted to follow such a man. The great measures with which his name is associated show the influence he possessed.

Personally, Mr. Platt was a model of tact. His industry was inexhaustible. He was a "working member" from the start. If something was to be done, Mr. Platt was the man to do it. He had the happy gift of remembering

faces and people, and so escaped from many of the troubles that came upon his colleague, General Hawley, who forgot letters, faces, and people themselves, and often lost friends thereby, although he really carried in his heart only the kindest sentiments toward all mankind. Hawley had to fight for most of his re-elections, while to all appearances Platt's came to him without a contest. It is true that there were occasions when the riot act had to be read to those who wanted to shove him aside; but it was heard and heeded. He was so strong that a contest was manifestly useless. Start the rumor that an attempt was to be made against him, and the State sizzled with indignation. So it came about that he was elected five times, an honor Connecticut has never conferred on any other of her sons.

Mr. Platt was equal to his opportunity. When he was so unexpectedly elected, not a few disappointed observers set him down for a clever politician and an ordinary lawyer, and doubted if he was able to fill the bill. He remained to the end a clever politician, and was so recognized all through the State; but he developed finely into constitutional lawyer, expounder, orator, and statesman, a great man among those in highest places. Doubt among observers gave way to pride, and the whole State was his and he was its.

Platt and Hawley made a splendid working team. They were different in many respects and sometimes differed in opinion and consequently in vote, but they were always together in the most friendly relations, and those who heard Mr. Platt's tribute to his colleague the other day at the State-house will always remember its sweetness and sincerity and the grief as for a brother that so shook him as he spoke. Few of us thought as he stood there, tall, straight, and apparently as well as he had been for years, that so soon his turn would come.

For many years Platt and Hawley stood together there at Washington, two big men for one little State, making their State big by the strength they gave to its voice in

affairs. General Hawley began to die several years ago, and his retirement was natural and inevitable; but the fall of Senator Platt is a sudden and altogether unexpected calamity, and its extent is not to be measured offhand at the moment. We all mourn together. The State has lost her foremost citizen. The public calamity is also a widespread private grief. We doubt if any other man in Connecticut was so beloved. Gentle, approachable, cordial, and always helpful, he was the friend of us all. It is a great thing for the State to have had his splendid services for so long—and it is a great loss to be deprived of them. But he has done the work, not of one man only, but of many, in his long and useful life, and he is entitled to his rest, and entitled to the high place he will take in the roll of great men whom this State has given to the nation.

Waterbury American

Senator Platt's life has furnished a remarkable example of gradual and constant mental development. Every year has been a little stronger, a little wiser, a little better, than the last. His latest years were therefore his best, and he dies at the very height of his mental powers and when his influence was greatest. He met the responsibilities of to-day so well that new and heavier ones were put upon him to-morrow, and they have increased and grown until he has become one of the pillars of the national temple. He made Connecticut the foremost State in influence in the United States Senate. He was the most progressive mind among the older men in that body, doing his best to free it from the chains of rule and habit that made action difficult and gave each member power to thwart all the rest.

Waterbury Republican

He had genius—that genius which the philosopher has defined as the ability to work hard; an ability that devel-

ops character, that makes brave and resourceful men, not afraid to grapple with the most perplexing and sometimes seemingly insurmountable problems and to go deep into them, that begets self-confidence through successful experience, and earns popular confidence by solid deeds accomplished. We do not need to apologize for the absence of brilliancy in such a man, as if it were something lacking in him. He was better off without it, for he trusted, not in the inspirations of a mind that flashes good or bad ideas, but upon careful thought and a rich experience earned with toil. An Ingalls arouses our admiration and plaudits for a time, and passes away. A Platt grows wiser and more dependable every day of his life and dies in the harness.

Meriden Record

The life work of Senator Platt is like a mosaic. Each tiny piece fits perfectly into its companion, making an artistic and practical whole which challenges admiration. There have always been a sequence and a proportion about Senator Platt's words and deeds which have compelled respect. Never did he act first and think afterwards. This logical reasoning and dispassionate thinking led him to occupy the highest position among the counsellors of the nation. His versatility as exploited in his exquisitely fashioned thoughts and delicately moulded language was offset by a stability of reasoning and a power of expression which made him a potent statesman as well as orator.

Aristocratic in all the good that the word implies, he was a born democrat, and this one characteristic had much to do in the career of this distinguished politician, for politician he was, of the purest, highest type. He was a student of men as well as of events.

New Haven Leader

He did not dominate by force, but because of sturdy common-sense, sterling honesty, unselfish consecration to duty.

He allured by genuine goodness of heart and mind, and he subdued by the sweetness of a frank, clear-headed prophetic vision which rarely was at fault and never eclipsed by selfish purpose.

New Haven Register

He began early to see that great as it was to be a distinguished beneficiary of partisan support, it was greater to be an American citizen in office. It was towards this goal that he worked steadily but slowly, for his was not the mind to take short cuts to a destination, and he began the honorable journey with the determination to become a master of the intricacies of Senatorial organization. As the years multiplied during which his patience never wearied, his good sense increased. He learned the folly of impetuous action, the emptiness of opportune appeals to passion, and the ever-present value of sticking to fundamental laws. Simple but direct in speech, his occasional remarks on the floor of the Senate commanded attention, and his colleagues awoke more and more to the fact that, while they did not have in the senior Senator from Connecticut a man of brilliant personal magnetism with whom to cross swords, in the clash of rhetorical battle, they had a plain, straight-hitting, and effective fighter of conviction and courage. What little he had to say rang forth with the music of earnestness, the highest form of true eloquence.

New Haven Journal and Courier

During the last few years he has been the chief doer of things in the Senate, relied on as the friend and counsellor of the President, and known the country over as a true patriot and a safe guide.

New London Globe

Orville H. Platt was a thoroughly good man. There was not a page of his life that could not be read by every

eye. He served his God, his country, and every relation of the private citizen with unfailing regard for right.

Brooklyn Eagle

Large, necessarily large as our appropriations have been, they would have been millions more had he not stood like a stone wall against iniquitous or doubtful propositions. Nor was his work one of prevention alone. He was a constructive statesman of the first rank. He framed or redrafted not a few of the measures to which the names of other men were attached on their original introduction of them. Every important act of Congress in his time was powerfully affected by his suggestion or opposition, when his party had the control of affairs. He is best known as the author of the Platt Amendment to the measure which recognized the independence of the Cuban republic. It was an amendment which forever made paramount the rights and the influence of the United States over that republic and which that republic itself set in its Constitution as a permanency. But the measures are thousands for number which he has quite as vitally directly or indirectly affected. William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt never had a better, a wiser, or a more independent friend. The latter has tenderly and eloquently expressed his obligations to him. . . .

He looked like Abraham Lincoln, and was unconscious of it. He resembled Abraham Lincoln in virtues and in wisdom, but did so without any purposed imitation. Executive responsibility did not come to him. His was all legislative. But if that responsibility had come to him, we think he would have shown himself to be a great administrative character and power. We are aware that many of our readers will be surprised by the strong estimate of him here expressed. But that estimate is deserved. Every editor knows or should know what an influential, patriotic, conscientious, mentally strong and morally fine

public servant and Senatorial leader Orville H. Platt was. Republicanism had in him a tower of strength. Toward Democrats and toward Democracy he was in nothing malevolent and in all matters fair and tolerant. His friendships dissolved party lines. His confidence in a man was itself a tribute to that man's character and capacity. He was a partisan, but he always sought to make his party better, and in all the things in which it followed him it became better, because it followed him. We can not but regard his death as a national loss, and we can only hope that the reality of his influence will long be felt by his party, and the things yet unsecured which he devised for his country will be hereafter secured by legislation and by administration in the years that are to come.

New York Evening Post

Solidity, rather than brilliancy, was always Mr. Platt's chief characteristic. In the Senate he proved a strong man, becoming one of the half-dozen controlling spirits. In fact, he had for years been a sort of monitor of the Senate. Following everything closely, and with a wide knowledge of national affairs, it became the habit of the newer and less attentive Senators to be governed by his course, in matters of routine, voting as they saw him vote, accepting his judgment as that of the party, and in the large number of things where no partisan lines are drawn, as that of the Senate. When questionable policies, especially along new and sensational lines, have been proposed, the common query has been: "What will Platt of Connecticut think of that?" In this respect he fulfilled the theory of a Senator which the founders of the republic had in mind.

New York Staats-Zeitung

Senator O. H. Platt of Connecticut, over whose grave New England now mourns, was a whole man. He was a

politician from head to toe, but in every inch a man of honor. He was a worthy companion of that other departed statesman of New England whom Massachusetts had honored with the senatorial toga. Seldom, however, in our time are men like Hoar and Platt of Connecticut produced. They sit only isolated in the halls of legislation —those men whose word is as good as a bond. One must look around until they are found for men to whom the mandate given to them by the people is worth more than self-interest. Even if Platt was never untrue to the orders of his party, which he himself had mistakenly written, he was nevertheless always true to the interests of the people who had confided to him his high office, which he filled in the Senate for so many years with honor and dignity.

New York Tribune

A veteran in national politics, with a service in the Senate extending back for twenty-six years, Mr. Platt had risen to a truly commanding position in public life. He was one of the real leaders in the deliberative branch of Congress, sharing with perhaps half a dozen colleagues the enormous powers which usage and tradition confer on the men who shape and execute that body's legislative programme. He had been for years a guiding spirit in those intimate inner conferences in which the fate of measures and policies is decided, and his influence had been felt in the solution of every problem of vital consequence with which the Senate was called upon to deal. His activities were both constructive and critical; for while as a member, and subsequently as Chairman, of the Judiciary Committee his advice was sought on the form and spirit of hundreds of measures, he interested himself besides in initiating and championing far-reaching measures of his own, his Amendment to the Army Appropriation Bill of March 2, 1901, defining the relations of Cuba to the

United States, giving him an indisputable claim to high rank among the constructive statesmen of his generation.

Mr. Platt's power as a leader was due not so much to brilliancy as to steadiness. He was industrious, patient, and clear-sighted, and, though he lacked oratorical gifts, he had the faculty of sifting, in whatever he discussed, the relevant from the irrelevant, the material from the immaterial. His mind was practical and his temper serene and equable.

Washington Post

It is to be regretted that this simple, plain, great character was so little known to the people of the country. His whole career is a rebuke to the thoughtless and malicious critics who describe the Senate as a "millionaire's club," composed of men working solely for moneyed interests and in heartless disregard of the rights of the people.

Senator Platt was a plain, blunt man. His great gift was that of common sense. His leading characteristic was an inborn hatred of sham and pretence. He spoke rarely, always rising with an odd appearance of bashfulness. His speech was marvellously condensed and compact with the common sense that amounts to wisdom. His gestures were awkward and jerky. His manner was always austere, and sometimes, to those who did not know him well, he appeared to be impatient and petulant. On occasion he employed sarcasm with blighting effect, but never with bitterness. His industry in unearthing frauds and his ability in stamping them as such in a single sentence were remarkable. At times Senator Platt displayed a peculiar thorny wit, that was the delight of his older colleagues, who knew the lovable nature of the man under his unbending front.

Absolutely without pretence, Senator Platt performed the tasks that fell to him without a thought of public praise or blame. He made himself master of the subject

before him, and then gave to his country the conclusions of an honest and singularly clear brain. His industry was incessant and his independence unquestioned. He was a conservative by heredity and training. He clung to things that had been tried and proved. No one in the Senate was swayed less by popular clamor, whether this clamor was right or wrong. His duty as he perceived it was to study and deliberate, for the purpose of reaching wise conclusions. He performed that duty without the slightest regard to public criticism.

Washington Star

During his whole career in the Senate he was a power for good. Men of both parties had faith in him, sought his counsel, and in many things followed it. In this way he impressed himself on legislation with which his name was not identified, while the legislation which he openly fashioned was of the best. He was a stout partisan, but not a narrow one, and he believed in the United States and its destiny implicitly.

The Troy Times

The chief factor in making Senator Platt one of the six or eight who formed the leading group in the United States Senate was his sagacity. He had New England common-sense, and when to this was added fidelity to political, moral, and personal principle, together with unflagging industry, the result could not fail to be potent in the affairs of the Senate. Senator Platt was not an orator, but in these days of business administration of complex interests he was more than an orator—he was a man of business genius. To reconcile conflicting ideas, to point out wise solutions, and to formulate plans and agreements that will endure the scrutiny of criticism and the test of operation —this is the most useful function of statesmanship, and in this capacity Senator Platt was pre-eminent.

Philadelphia Press

It often happens through adventitious circumstances that a public man's reputation is bigger than he is. Senator Platt, on the other hand, was bigger than his reputation. Modest, unassuming, unaffected, he did not seem, save to those who knew the inside, to be playing the great part he was actually filling. He was one of the remarkable group of four or five men who have been the real dominant leaders of the Senate, and who for years have moulded its policies and action. The Senate is a body where seniority, masterfulness, and personality together make up the intangible force which gives a man ascendant influence. Mr. Platt's unerring sagacity marked him for leadership as clearly as Mr. Aldrich's robust strength and Mr. Allison's unfailing equipoise and Mr. Spooner's combined penetration and forensic power marked them for the foremost rank.

He had the unlimited confidence of his associates. They reposed implicit trust in his sobriety of judgment and in his purity of purpose. He was endowed with saving sense, and going back over his long record it can be said that he was almost invariably right. He had clear insight and a quick sympathy with the true currents of the American people. Though missing the high oratorical gift, he had a directness, pungency, and virility of speech that made him a forcible debater. He was thoroughly unselfish, and no man was ever more a true patriot in the best sense of the word. It could be said of him, as Wolsey charged Cromwell, that all the ends he aimed at were his country's, his God's, and truth. He had the high moral quality of Senator Hoar, and he was more practical.

Peoria Evening Star

When it came to the practical application of the principles of government that needed legislation, Platt had no superior in the Senate. In committee work, in the

conferences that shaped the policy of the nation, Platt was a power. He never strutted, he never made grand-stand plays, he never appealed to the prejudices of the multitude; he was straight up and down, never frivolous, never tricky, never artful, never unreliable. He had the old New England common-sense. He was like a stalwart oak. There was no room in his neighborhood for underbrush. There was a Ben Franklin wisdom in everything he said or did, and because of these qualities the President sought his counsel. His brother Senators deferred to his judgment, and he remained up to the last moment of his life a man of great power in the State.

Sioux Falls Press

South Dakota has reason to hold in affectionate regard the memory of Mr. Platt. Without his valuable assistance, the contest for statehood in 1889 would have failed, and the omnibus bill through which four new stars were added to the national galaxy would have been defeated. Senator Vest of Missouri, recently deceased, led the opposition, and had not Senator Platt come to the rescue of the Territories asking for admission, Mr. Vest would have succeeded. South Dakota is entitled to a place among those of this great nation who mourn the departure of a statesman and a friend.

Kansas City Journal

The United States Senate is quick to distinguish between a mere emotional orator and a man of solid attainments, and Senator Platt belonged to the latter class by virtue of his clear, practical common-sense, fortified by years of tireless industry in the study of public matters in all their details. An indefatigable worker, with a taste for legislation, his long years of public service made him a master of most public questions; in fact it was said that he knew

more about matters coming before the various committees than most of the members did themselves.

Topeka Capital

In some respects he was the strongest man in the United States Senate. With Aldrich, and Allison he was the authority on all fiscal subjects, and on tariff questions was the foremost man in either branch of Congress.

Seattle Post-Intelligencer

Senator Platt has never stood much in the lime-light. He was never one of the great orators of the country or of the Senate. He was never overly conspicuous in debate. But he was more. His long years in the public service; his ripened wisdom; his magnificent common-sense and his complete familiarity with public affairs made him the final counsellor, the adviser of last resort upon whose judgment his colleagues in the Senate, and the Executive as well, had learned to rely with absolute confidence. In this sense he was a great statesman.

Atlanta Constitution

A very great many people believe that Orville H. Platt was the ablest of all Northern Senators. Other men have been more in the lime-light of publicity, others have figured more often in Senate debate and in political harangue, others have been and are much better known throughout the country; but it is doubtful if any other Senator from the New England States or from any Northern State has ranked as high as Senator Platt. Certainly none since death claimed Senator Hoar.

The product of New England, he stood as the representative of not only the ideas but the ideals of that section of the country, a section as distinctive as is the West or

the South. In him was reflected the rugged conscience, the strict integrity, the blunt directness of the Puritan; but with all this there was that consideration for others which marks the gentleman whencesoever he may hail, a broad humanitarianism, and a tenderness that may have seemed to the superficial observer out of place in that apparently stern environment. To those who had not the opportunity of insight into his real character, Senator Platt seemed all mind and without heart. As a matter of fact, however, no man had keener sympathies for his fellow men and their best interests.

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